Mondaiji-tachi ga iseki kara kuru soudesu yo Volume 02

Source: https://www.baka-tsuki.org/project/index.php?title=Mondaiji-tachi_ga_isekai_kara_kuru_soudesu_yo:Volume_2

Tatsunokotarou
竜ノ湖太郎
illustration
天之有
あら、魔王襲来のお知らせ？
問題児たちが異世界から来るそうですよ？
角川スニーカー文庫

おおおおお月の兎が
本当にきたあああああああぁ
黒ウサギ
お前に会う
ため
今日こそスカー
ぞおおお
おおおおお
進行及び審判は、
黒ウサギがお務めさせて
いただきます♪
見えてしまえば
只々下品な下着達も
―見えなければ
芸術だッ!!!

“グリムグリモワール・ハーメルン”
VS
“ノーネーム”
逆廻十六夜
久遠飛鳥
春日部耀
ラッテン
ヴェーザー
ペスト
魔王が……魔王が現れたぞオオオオオオ――――!!!

わ、わわ、……
待つのですーー!!!!!!
私……箱庭に来て本当によかったわ。

問題児たちが異世界から来るそうですよ？

あら、魔王の襲来のお知らせ？

contents

プロローグ 005

第一章 022

第二章 049

第三章 076

第四章 093

第五章 129

第六章 159

第七章 183

第八章 226

幕間 202

エピローグ 290

あとがき 308

口絵・本文イラスト／天之有

口絵・本文デザイン／百足屋ユウコ（ムシカゴグラフィクス）

Prologue

Part 1

-Year 194X, 1st August, room 207 of the girl's dormitory-

The rainy season was over, sleeping was uncomfortable due to the high humidity, the half-awake birds immediately snapped out of their state as dawn approached.

Hearing a stiff yet light knocks on the door, she twitched her ears.

"Kudou-sama, are you awake? I'm here to fetch you, please get ready."

"........Fine, I got it."

Asuka slightly opened her eyes, what greeted her was the familiar ceiling, dark gray walls and windows.

Turning her body, she was surprised by the servant's strange voice. It was most likely a new servant that was recruited without her knowing. Everytime she hears the monotonous flat voice, Asuka would always be filled with whimsical thoughts, suspecting if the servant was actually an android.

"If it was like that, it would be interesting." She thought.

But evidently these wonderful fantasy settings do not casually happen that easily.

There wasn't anything special, only the excited roar of the warden's "Wake up! It's a nice morning". Even though there wasn't anything worth mentioning today, Asuka started tilting her head.

(....What is this? I felt like I had a very euphoric dream.)

It was true, Asuka did have a happy dream. A very, very, happy dream.

Spending 15 years of living with a tedious lifestyle, she probably had not felt that much joy in a while and had momentarily forgotten the contents of her dream.

"Ojou-sama? What happened?"

".....I'm fine, I know the procedure, wait for me while I change my clothes."

Asuka, in response to her urging voice, could not resist and started laughing.

(Hahaha, How could this be? I don't even have any happy memories, yet a blissful dream? This is like putting the cart before the horse!)

After she pulled back the curtains, she looked at the dawn-approaching sky. The unlit room was like a pit of darkness. The humidity level was high as when it was mid-summer so wearing the sweat-soaked night shirt was uncomfortable. Asuka proceeded to unbutton her shirt and readily put it aside.

Asuka remembered that she had to pay a visit back home. Being trapped in the dormitory for so long, she could look forward to escaping this hell hole.....

However she did not have to persuade her grandfather about the duties.

(Calling a little 15 year old girl to go back just to persuade her grandfather, it really does instill fear huh.)

Asuka listlessly sighed heavily. With regards to the matter about persuading her grandfather, it probably referred to the dissolution of the facilities of the consortium policy at the General Headquarters.

Of course, it also included one of the best financial groups in Japan. In order to avoid that ending, Grandfather had to secretly continue the lobbying actions, using antipathy as an effective method to influence the opposition.

In order to dispell the unnecessary death throes, Kudou Asuka - Who could manipulate people based on words alone was needed.

Putting on her uniform, Asuka, wearing a self-deprecating smile sighed heavily.

(.....What an embarrassing situation.)

Although Asuka was not an energetic person, she believed that it was important to return back home. It was a good chance for her to escape her life as a caged bird.

(The plan that was forged long ago.....It appears it holds some value now.)

Asuka smiled picturesquely.

Opening her bag, inside were tools needed for when it was time to escape.

However even if she was not prepared, as long as her heart yearned for it, leaving the house was nothing difficult.

"If I use the easy mode to leave this place, it would be a waste!"

These truthful words increased the difficulty of her escape.

"Okay, it's time to set out, Kudou Asuka! Persuade grandpa, then leave this cage!"

Asuka announced her declaration with prideful and noble words.

Cherishing her dream, hoping that she would be able to "Spread her wings and fly" brilliantly.

Part 2

-Residential Area, Outer Gate Number: 2105380, "No Name" Community. Asuka's room-

Time sure flew as it had already been a month. There were remnants of dew left on the windows and even the air was cold.

Morning arrived as the warm sunlight invited themselves into Asuka's room awakening her.

(How great, I can actually lay down and relax in bed instead of listening to the warden's roar.)

She turned her body and smiled, enjoying the privilege of having a room with a soft and fluffy bed.

The time outside was not as dark as Asuka perceived it to be. Although the sun had already risen, the air still brought a chilly feeling

For this Ojou-sama's 15 years in life, she had always been receiving severe education after the war. In addition to the strict dormitory lifestyle she was forced to live with, waking up at that time would be considered as late?

If it was the usual Asuka, she would change her clothes immediately after waking up, comb her messy hair in front of the dresser and adjust her outer appearance.

However, all that was not necessary from now on.

Even if she enjoyed all that blissful and luxurious morning in a half-awakened state, nobody would lecture her, right?

(Well, I apparently dreamt of something meaningless..... Nevermind. Probably 'cause of boredom that I could not remember the contents of the dream.)

Asuka was in a good mood today. Although she knew that she would always be moody after she woke up, that feeling was not present today.

When she was thinking of trying the rumoured "falling asleep after waking up", it was at this time when...

Knock*Knock

"Uhh, Kasukabe here. Are you awake Asuka? I'm here to deliver breakfast with the kids."

"....."

(Ugh, what a headache) Asuka huddled her body.

Already deciding to go back to sleep, waking up would be a painful choice. However, dismissing her cute and adorable friend who specially delivered food to her would be terrible of her.

(....Please, just five more minutes. Let me return back to dreamland for once.)

Knock*Knock*Knock

"Asuka?.... Are you still sleeping?"

The overcautious knocking was tormenting Asuka and there were lonely sounds that echoed within her consciousness.

Even if it was like this, the act of wanting to sleep again won her over. Asuka covered her head with the blanket.

The overcautious knocking still continued to resound.

Knock*Knock*Knock*Knock

Every knock was subsequently louder.

Asuka felt apologetic, letting her consciousness fade into idleness and the greed to sleep and just when she was about to fall into bliss...

***Knock*Knock*Knock

Part 3

"I'm finished, please come in."

"Sorry for intruding."

"Sorr.... Sorry for intruding."

Beside Kasukabe's voice, there was another young yet vibrant voice, probably the orphan kids senior.

Wearing a Japanese style apron suitable for her short appearance with fox ears as a trait, the young lady pushed the trolley into the room.

"Sorry to bother you, Asuka. I felt it would be a waste if the specially prepared breakfast went cold."

"It's..... It's not a problem at all, Kasukabe."

Looking at Kasukabe who scratched her head embarrassingly trying to explain herself, Asuka whose feelings were distorted managed to squeeze out a smile.

At the same time, Kasukabe gently nudged the girl with the fox ears. The girl exposed a nervous expression as she pushed away the trolley containing the breakfast and bowing to Asuka with a stiff expression.

"I'm ..... I'm.....I'm called Lily!"

"Eh?"

"Lily, calm down."

Kasukabe with a bitter smile gently pat Lily's back.

The girl, who was restlessly moving her ears and her two tails, was the senior of the orphanage.

"Hmm, you were the one who brought the biscuits to us back then right? Is the hot tea and breakfast also prepared by you?"

"Ye.... Yes! I heard that Asuka-san likes herbal tea, so I prepared the necessary ingredients from our garden. I have also prepared food that can reduce drowsiness, I.... Hope you will enjoy it."

"Does the [No Name] have a vegetable garden as well?""Ye... Yes! Although it's a bit small, everyone worked hard together to put this garden together. If the land did not lose it's vitality, we could raise some cattle, or like in the past, when we had the vast and huge garden..."

"In the past?"

Lily pointed out the window and replied,

"Yes! Returning to the place where we store the water, beside the main road, there was a very very wide land for agriculture. There was also a ranch and every year when the season changes, we always had a celebration. Although now the land has completely lost its vitality..... However, in the past we had a special garden that grew herbs and medicines. We also had many many good plantations."

"Really? To have possessed such a large and extensive land."

Asuka slowly nodded her head, understanding that in the past there were many plantations.

Part 4

Their companions, The [No Name] community had a large land, although it was destroyed by a Demon Lord, they had continued living in such a district. In the past, the population of this district could rival a metropolis, to accommodate that much people, naturally the agriculture aspects were heavily relied on.

Kasukabe bit down the fragrant bread that just came out of the stove, in a soft voice speaking the obvious.

"Plantation.... This plantation, is there a way to rebuild it?"

"Yup, if we had our own plantation, we would not be wasting our time by participating in useless Gift Games."

Holding the tea cup close to her mouth, Asuka also nodded her head in agreement.

[Gift Game] —— In this Little Garden, obtaining strong [Gifts] from godly games.

However, this game had another different aspect to it which is the duel between the [Host] and the [Challenger].

Communities would put bargaining chips and prizes at stake in order to obtain wealth, land, fame, people... Using the miraculous [Gifts] to carry out the battles.

This was the [Gift Game].

Of course, to obtain stronger gifts from the gift game, naturally the game would be more dangerous.

The slightly worried Lily placed both her hands on her chest, replying to both people:

"But ..... But... Kuro Usagi-nee said... That... The large scale gift game needed to revive the land.... Is very dangerous..."

"Hmm? Isn't that interesting? Anyway we have been idle until we are going to lose one's head!"

Asuka placed the cup onto the table and leaked out a provoking smile.

With [Perseus'] gift game over, they had already tried fighting hand-to-hand with other [2105280 Outer Gate] communities, but it still did not stimulate the expectation that Asuka was looking forward to.

[Throw away your family, friends, wealth, everything in your world, and come to the Little Garden.]

They accepted the intriguing yet mysterious and wonderful invitation, precisely because they looked forward to coming here, to experience life brimming with excitement. However, they were now gradually living a lazy lifestyle, which was not ideal.

Asuka nodded.

"Okay, so we put [Reviving the land] as our main motive now. We need to discuss this with Kuro Usagi."

When the conversation was about to end, a letter flew into the room from outside the window.

"Hmm?"

That strangely familiar letter made Asuka and Kasukabe continuously blink their eyes.

The seal had two goddesses facing each other, also referring to the flag of [Thousand Eyes].

Lily breathed in the air, then spoke loudly.

"How....HOW WONDERFUL! This is the first time I have seen a letter with the [Thousand Eyes] stamp! This is personally stamped by Shiroyasha herself inviting players to participate in a gift game!"

"Shiroyasha sent this?"

"The superior allocater?"

Asuka and Kasukabe stared at the letter with their eyes filled with excitement.

The former Demon Lord, probably the strongest floor master, Shiroyasha.

Since it was her who sent out the Gift Game letters, it made it more valuable to attend.

Asuka and Kasukabe exchanged eye contact with each other, happily tearing open the gift game letter.

Part 5

-Former old plantation site, Residential Area, Outer Gate Number: 2105380, Little Garden-

The rustling of sand could be heard.

Kuro Usagi and Leticia were standing on the white ground that had now fallen into disuse.

Leticia who was wearing the maid uniform with a specially created ribbon that is tied onto her beautiful blonde hair, shook her head with sorrow and was crouching down on the once beautiful ground.

"..... How miserable, and to think that this was once called the plantation district. Now there's only rock and gravel."

The fertile soil from 3 years ago was non-existent now.

Both Leticia and Kuro Usagi sullenly lowered their heads.

"Kuro Usagi is very sorry. We only managed to solve the problem with the water supply, even the children are slowly tending it."

"Eh? Ahhh, that's not it, I'm not scolding you. After all this problem can't be resolved that easily by humans."

Leticia panickingly waved both her hands. She then picked up some of the soil by her side confirming the situation.

"This can't be helped, the land has already lost all vitality. Even if there's water, animals would not want to stay here. If we want to focus on bringing back the land, we will have to waste a lot of time."

".... Yeah."

Both of them started sighing.

They knew what the land was like when it was fertile, it was definitely unbearable to see this sight happening to the land that lost it's vitality. The land that once bore colorful and bright fruits, surrounded by a swaying sea of gold colored rice, had already ceased to exist. A burst of injury channeled through their hearts.

The worst kind of tragedy the communities of Little Garden would face was -- [Demon Lord]. The scars created would be huge, not only does it take away companions and pride the community might have, even their future was also stripped away.

Leticia stood up, patting away the gravel left on her maid uniform, she grimly said:

"... What a tremendous power. I have been living for quite a long time, to meet Demon Lords that had this much power, would only be a handful of times."

With a serious expression, Kuro Usagi and Leticia started evaluating the Demon Lords' power.

No matter the district area or countryside, both sides had met with ruins of their own, experiencing this for a long time.

Since it's like that, the reason was as clear as day.

Kuro Usagi, with a worried face, reached a conclusion:

"For this land to be perished in such a short period of time, and with such huge destruction, the only capable ones are the [Star-Class] and above, it can even dominate the celestial body to some degree, right?"

"If a star-class demon were to have this much power, it would only be Shiroyasha..... Or the Golden Demon Lord Star-class monster."

Both of them revealed bitter expressions. The heavy silence highlighted the undeniable dangerous power of the Demon Lord.

"Soooo... It's the work of the [Strongest Class] Demon Lord right?"

"It can only be that..... What a poor joke."

Kuro Usagi and Leticia looked at each other, managing a powerless laughter.

In the Little Garden, where gods and others gather, there were the 3 strongest classes.

---Natural gods were [Divine] Class

---Ghosts or spirits, monsters or others that had the largest position was [Star] Class

---—The Eudemons that stems from the original dragon seed [Pureblood] Class。

Known throughout the Little Garden as the strongest class, it was nearly suicidal to be their opponents.

These classes that had the most powerful class, even the outside world did not even have a chance to glimpse upon them. To change the perspective, if a community had been observed by those monsters, could it be counted as honourable? Even when Leticia was being referred as a Demon Lord, she would keep her distance from these classes.

Leticia who flung her ribbon, looked at the wilderness, suddenly thinking of something.

"Hmmm, to get things right, since the opposition had this much power, at least the community's name was heard of, right?"

"Even if we consult Shiroyasha-sama, we would only know that it was not a community from the north side."

"Hmmm, since Shiroyasha said so, it must be true."

Leticia leaked out a bitter smile while slightly shivering due the unknown assailant of this place.

Even when facing such a dire threat, Kuro Usagi, who did not lose her will to fight, merely produced a strong-willed smile.

"Plea... Please don't be too worried! Be.. Because in our community, we have 3 strong gift users! If everyone starts cooperating, Kuro Usagi believes that restoring this land would not be a difficult task!"

Kuro Usagi held up her fist, and even Leticia started nodding while smiling.

"Unn, If it's them, they could solve this predicament while laughing."

From a place away from the Little Garden came 3 new members.

They managed to save the captive Leticia from the Demon Lord, and they also fought for the community. If it was them, no matter what kind of challenge, they would overcome them right?

They were no longer the community that could not do anything in the past.

In this Little Garden where divine beings gather, if they want to have a miracle, they would have to win it themselves.

Kuro Usagi raised her finger, busily moving her rabbit eats, continued saying,

"The most ideal condition for us is, we must establish a life hoop in this community. If we manage to do this, we can be capable of accumulating food reserves, and increase our organization's strength!"

"Unn! The urgent priority is to allow the land to be reborn, the Southern District Harvest Festival is our immediate goal."

"YES! Now is the time everyone must work together to bring back our land!"

"However, what are you going to do about the festival in the Northern district? There's still some time before it happens. If they knew about it, they would be very happy right?"

Kuro Usagi suddenly made an "Ugh" sound, changing to an embarrassed expression, she did not say anything else.

"What is it? You didn't tell them? That is the largest festival sponsored by the Northern and Eastern floor masters right? Even if the 7 digit is the lowest gate, it would still be a gorgeous festival. Master should be able to obtain good results...."

"No... It is... We are lacking in travel fees. In our current state, we don't have much money we can use to travel through the dimensional gate. No matter how much we struggle and struggle, one trip will be our limit...."

Hearing Kuro Usagi's apologetic speech, Leticia was also speechless, sighing while managing a bitter smile.

"Lacking in money sure is tough, eh?"

"How... However we just need to be patient for a little longer. Kuro Usagi believes that Izayoi-san and the rest will get good gifts during the Southern District Harvest Festival!"

"Kuro..... Kuro Usagi-nee~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~! Not.... Not good ~ ~ ~ ~ ~!"

They turned to face the direction it was coming from, wearing a Japanese style apron, the young fox girl called Lily appeared, carrying an expression like she was going to cry.

"Lily? What happened?"

"Asu... Asuka-san brought Izayoi-san and Yō-san....Ah, thi....This! The letter she left behind!"

Lily, who was frantically flinging her two fox tails around, passed the letter to Kuro Usagi.

"To Kuro-Usagi:

We are going to participate in the festival held by the Northern District 4000000 Outer Gate and Eastern District 3999999 Outer Gate.

You must also come. Also, Leticia-san has to come as well.

As the punishment for you concealing the contents of the letter from us, if you are unable to catch us by today, the three of us will leave the community. Better start running to find us, we will give you our utmost support!

p.s. We also took Jin as our tour guide."

"....."

"....."?"

"....."!"

The silence continued until 30 seconds has passed.

Kuro Usagi started trembling while holding the letter and issued a wail like cry,

"Whuh..... WHAT ARE THOSE PROBLEMATIC CHILDREN SAYING!! AGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

The shrill cry emitted by Kuro Usagi resounded. [Leaving] was no small statement.

Because she expected too much, Kuro Usagi forgot something important.

The three new members with great strength----Were actually their world's most problematic children.

Chapter 1

Part 1

-[No Name] Museum, Basement level 3.-

Taking a look back in time. Izayoi and Jin were reading books from last night to late at night, creating a small mountain of books, now both of them were asleep. Izayoi, who hung the soaked and spoilt headphones around his neck, raised his head and murmured,

"....Oi...Chibi-chan, are you awake?"

"...Fuuuu..."

"Still sleeping eh....Hmmmm, since he tried to accompany me in reading the books, of course this would happen."

"Fuahh~" The loud and clear sound he emitted echoed throughout the empty and desolate stack room.

Everyday in the morning he would leave his operation base, once he returned he would immediately search for books that he had not read, this was Izayoi's preferred method of living. Jin was in charge of taking care of the stack room, therefore he had also followed Izayoi's actions--- Since the day Izayoi first came into the Little Garden, he had been repeating that sort of lifestyle daily. Although Izayoi had great physical strength, the desire to sleep has already reached its limit back then.

As both of them started to let out intoxicated sleeping sounds, a flustered Asuka dashed down the staircase to reach them.

"Izayoi-kun! Where are you?"

"....Un? Ohh, it's the Ojou-sama..."

Izayoi, who was losing consciousness, shook his head, attempting to re-enter the realm of dreams. Asuka placed several scattered books as a stepping platform, then she jumped towards Izayoi while executing the kick using her knee -- Alias [Shining Wizard], trying to hit the side of Izayoi's head.

"Wake up nowww!"

"Don't think about succeeding!"

"Whoaaaaaa!"

Asuka's kick landed beautifully on the side of the human shield, Jin Russel's head.

Jin, who got attacked immediately after waking up, rolled three and a half rounds to somewhere distant.

The stack room resounded with the sound of Lily's panicky yell, while Kasukabe brought out words with a surprised reaction.

"Jin.....Jin just rolled a few rounds out of here! Is he alright?"

"...I believe the side of his head that was attacked could not possibly be fine."

Witnessing the sudden chaotic situation, Lily ran over to Jin's side. Kasukabe, with an unwavering expression, pressed both her hands together in prayer.

Asuka did not seem to specifically care about accidentally kicking Jin. Putting her hands on her waist, she yelled,

"Izayoi-kun! Jin-chan! This is an important situation! How could you start falling back to sleep?!"

"Really? It's good to have an important situation and all, but Ojou-sama, I don't recommend you start using Shining Wizards on people's heads, I have strong

physical strength so it's another matter, but Chibi-chan's life might be in danger if it hits him."

"Wasn't the one who used me as a shield you, Izayoi-kun?!"

Jin abruptly got up from the small mountain of books, looking like he managed to keep his life.

"There isn't a problem at all. Look, isn't he alive and well?"

"Dead or Alive? You should say even if I live, it would have been fatal! Hasn't Kuro Usagi kept reminding Asuka-san to be more tactful...."

"Oi Chibi-chan, you are noisy."

Taaa! The book Izayoi threw hit Jin's head, giving him another fatal strike.

Jin who lost his consciousness, flew away faster than before. The extremely confused Lily stood at a side, unable to react to the situation.

Izayoi ignored the youngsters' rambling, then he shot an unhappy expression towards Asuka.

".....So? Since you dare to disturb someone's precious dream, it must be something valuable right?"

Izayoi responded to Asuka with enough killing intent to be serious. However, looking through the perspective of Izayoi, to be disturbed when sleeping peacefully, it must have ignited a strong rage. However, Asuka did not mind it at all, she knew what Izayoi was feeling as she had also been interrupted this morning when she tried to go back to sleep.

Asuka then proceeded to pass the invitation letter to the sleepy Izayoi.

"Ehh?"

Still carrying an unhappy expression, Izayoi started reading the opened letter.

"Twin goddess candle wax seal....Is the sender Shiroyasha? Ahhh~ What? This festival is hosted by the Northern and Eastern district [Floor Master] -- [Rise of the Fire Dragon] festival invitation?"

"Right. Although I'm not certain about the details, it certainly looks like a fantastic festival! You must be looking forward to it, right?"

Looking at Asuka's self-proud attitude, Izayoi trembled both his hands while shouting,

"Oi! Ojou-sama, what kind of joke is this! For this boring and downright thing, you disregarded my sleep, you even tried to use a Shining Wizard to kick the side of my head! And what about the contents of this festival? [Besides the beautiful art exhibits showcased by the ghosts and spirits of the Northern district, there are also many different types of Gift Games hosted. The main activity will be scheduled by the [Floor Master], hosting the large festival]! Darn it! It appears to be very interesting, we should go there and have a look~"

"It looks like you are quite enthusiastic about this, eh?"

Izayoi squirmed and jumped around like a beast, putting on his uniform naturally yet looking unrestrained.

After hearing what they said, Lily suddenly changed her expression, with a flustered look, she attempted to stop what everyone was going to do.

"Plea...Please wait a moment! Even if you want to go to the Northern district, at least discuss this with Kuro Usagi-nee....Rig....Right! Jin!

You need to hurry up! Everyone is going to the Northern district!"

"Nor....North district?"

After hearing [Going to the Northern district], the once unconscious Jin immediately jumped up, and he started questioning everyone about the absurd thing he heard,

"Plea.....Please wait a moment! Everyone! You said you were going to the Northern district....Is that true?"

"Unn. It is, is there a problem?"

"When do we have that much expenditure? Do you know how far it is from here to the boundary wall? Lily! Didn't we tell you to keep the large festival a secret----"

"Secret???"

The question marks on the three individuals became one with the sound. However, once Jin had realized that he misspoke, it was already too late, his whole body started to stiffen.

Jin took a glance at them, only seeing the problem children producing malicious grins, emitting out flames of anger.

"...Really? To hide such an interesting festival from us? *sobs* *sobs*"

"We obviously work hard everyday since we were trying to increase the community's strength, it is such a pity. *sobs* *sobs*"

"Since it's like this, we have to teach Kuro Usagi and the others a ruthless lesson right? *sobs* *sobs*"

Although the problem children were all faking their tears, a gleeful smile actually hung on their faces.

Facing against this unrelenting malice, the youngsters started to have cold sweat.

The poor Jin Russel was forcibly kidnapped by the problem children and together, they headed towards the Northern and Eastern district's boundary wall.

Part 2

After leaving the letter to Lily, the quadruple group consisting of Izayoi, Asuka, Kasukabe and Jin left the residential area of [No Name], heading towards the fountain plaza located at the Outer Gate of 2105380. A bunch of pedestrians were already at the cafe with the [Six Scars] flag that early in the morning, located at Peribed Avenue.

"When I'm this close to the plaza, I always wanted to ask.... The landscape design here in the No.2105380 Outer Gate is simply tasteless, who is the person in charge of this place?"

Asuka unhappily set her sight on No.2105380 Outer Gate.

The pillars that linked up the inner walls between the Outer Gate and Little Garden was a giant lion statue and what was engraved on it was the flag of the community that disappeared.....[Fores Garo].

While sighing, Jin explained to Asuka,

"As long as the district's hierarchies can crack the gift games provided by the floor master, he will earn the right to govern the Outer Gate. It can also serve as a function for the community's advertisement."

"Is that so...That's why the vestige of that demon remains here."

Asuka snorted, unhappily adjusting her hair.

After changing back from her unhappy mood, she turned her body to face the coffee table.

"Okay, so how are we going to get to the Northern district?"

Asuka asked Jin, while changing the posture of her legs that were covered by the long hems of her skirt.

Today, she was also wearing the long, red formal dress that she had received from Kuro Usagi.

Although wearing a formal dress that often was not very logical, once you got used to it, it wasn't that much of a big deal. Moreover, there were many people in Little Garden that wore even stranger clothing, after looking at such people, even Asuka would think that wearing formal dresses every day wasn't going to make her feel out of place.

Kasukabe Yō, who was sitting next to Asuka, replied while tilting her head.

"Ermmmmm ~ ... Since we know it is going to be held in the Northern district, won't we reach there if we keep moving North?"

After hearing the seemingly thoughtless suggestion that Kasukabe gave out, everyone started to laugh bitterly.

Since the timing is convenient, let's talk about Kasukabe's clothing. There wasn't anything different in her clothing since being called to Little Garden. She still wore the sleeveless shirt, shorts, thigh-high socks and boots, completely devoid of any feminine traits. The only thing fashionable about her was her boots, as that was one of the gifts given to her by Kuro Usagi.

Izayoi, who was sitting beside Kasukabe, questioned Jin:

"So, does our leader have any great plans?"

Out of the 3 people, the cheekily smiling Izayoi wore the most simple clothing, just a deep-blue high school uniform and spoilt headphones that hung around his neck.

Jin, who wore a loosely fit gown, sighed heavily.

"Although I had predicted this..... You guys really don't know how far it is from here to the Northern district boundary wall, do you?"

"I really don't know, is it really that far?"

Izayoi responded with a surprised expression. Suffering from a serious headache, Jin depressingly covered his face with both hands.

"....You guys really headed out without knowing the circumstances.... Then let me ask everyone first, did you know that Little Garden has the surface area of a star?"

"....? Huh? Star?"

Asuka was so shocked that her tone of voice changed. Even though Kasukabe's expression did not change, she still hurriedly blinked her eyes three times.

Izayoi nodded his head in acknowledgement, he then proceeded to question Jin with wrinkled eyebrows.

"Kuro Usagi mentioned this to me before. However, I also heard that nearly all the land in this world is thrown away as waste. Although the scale of the wastelands varies in size, but besides the Little Garden city, there are still other places right?"

"Indeed there are other cities. But Little Garden would always be the largest city in the world even if you remove some of its cities. Talking about the ratio of the surface area of Little Garden, other cities can't even compare to this place."

"Ratio?"

When Jin explained in such a serious tone, Asuka and the rest felt like they were having that idiotic atmosphere.

Basically, they wouldn't use the peculiar method of using [Planet's surface area ratio] to compare the sizes of cities.

Even though he used [Surface area of a star] to try explain the size, there would still be all sorts of measurements. But if the Little Garden world's surface area is the same as the Sun, it would be 13000 times the size of Earth.

The numbers would be so huge that it would look strange. Izayoi, his heart on alert, enquired with a shocked expression.

"Are you inferring.... [this city occupies about one percent of a star's total surface area], this kind of messy statement?"

"Tha....That is just too exaggerated already, although it is indeed about that ratio, but the numbers are still quite small."

"So...So it's like that, eh? Then, from here to the Northern district boundary wall, how far will it be?"

Asuka urged Jin for the right answer. Jin lifted his head up to think for a while, and eventually he replied,

"Because we are already close to the north, if I had to throw in a number.....I guess it would be about 980000 Kilometers."

"WOW!"

The three replied at the same time with different tones: overjoyed, speechless and calm.

Part 3

The actions of Kuro Usagi and Leticia were very fast and rapid.

After reading the contents of the letter, they left the old plantation site and went to check if Izayoi and the rest were still in the vicinity of the community. Lastly, Kuro Usagi took the treasure key to the basement, undoing the luxurious doors and the enchantment casted on it.

The door leading to the treasure room opened, accompanying it was the sound of heavy metal scraping the floor. The inside of the room was hollow, it was practically empty except for the center of the room, where a lonely bag stood.

After ending their search, the team led by Leticia and Lily returned, reporting their findings.

"Not in the cafeteria!"

"The hall, the rooms and the VIP suite have all been checked!"

"They are not near the water tank either!"

"I'm hungry..."

"Please wait a while more longer... Then, what about the situation in the treasury?"

"It doesn't look like the community's money has been taken. And it's unlikely that they have enough money by themselves to use the Astral Gate. If we are efficient, we can catch them near the Outer Gate."

"Kuro Usagi, you should head to the Outer Gate, if you can't find them, using your status as a [Highborn of Little Garden], you can use the Astral Gate for free. I will head to the [Thousand Eyes] branch shop. Since Shiroyasha sent the invitation letter, she might take them to the Northern district boundary wall for free."

After confirming the initiatives they ought to take, Kuro Usagi and Leticia firmly nodded their head.

The dangerous spark from Kuro Usagi's eyes could be represented as the embodiment of her anger.

"Those problematic children....! This time, this time! Kuro Usagi will...WILL NEVER FORGIVE THEM!"

Kuro Usagi's hair turned into shallow red from all the anger, after positioning herself, she scattered the sand while dashing out of the place.

Part 4

"That is just too far already!"

Asuka couldn't resist banging the coffee table in protest, after hearing that ridiculous number.

Jin, without showing any sign of weakness, remarked,

"RIGHT! It is indeed very far! Because in the Little Garden city, they will make people believe that what looks small is very small when it is actually huge, so the distance you perceive will be close when actually it is very far. If we look towards the cities elsewhere, it may look close, but the distance will be several times further than what you believe. That's why I had been warning everyone about this!" Jin shouted out.

Sitting beside him was Izayoi, who was calmly researching about the Little Garden.

"....Really? So when we arrived in this world, we could see the horizon of the Little Garden because someone deliberately tried to trick us into believing that this world is small?"

That's right. When they arrived in this world, after looking at the scale of Little Garden, they, for some reason, thought that the city was very huge.

Although everyone thinks that the Little Garden city had a huge exterior, but upon closer inspection, they would find out that it was actually an even bigger city.

Asuka embarrassingly closed her mouth, but after changing to a different approach, she asked again.

"Right, that can't be helped. I only hope that it was like last time when we traveled from an outer gate to another outer gate to challenge the community [Perseus]."

".....By that you mean, you wish to use the [Astral Gate]?"

Jin replied with a bitter expression.

---[Astral Gate], because of the inconvenience to travel in the Little Garden city, it was set up by linking an outer gate to another outer gate.

The reason why those in power in the district wanted the rights to maintain the outer gate was because regardless of peddlers, performances, those participating or hosting gift games, the outer gate was always a frequent point to use as a transportation point.

If they wanted to advertise their community's name, nothing was more effective as that.

Jin showed a sullen face upon that suggestion.

"If Asuka-san wants to use the [Astral Gate], I would have to completely reject it! In order to operate the [Astral Gate], an astonishing amount of expenditure is needed! Everyone would need to hand over one gold coin distributed by the [Thousand Eyes]! Four people means four gold coins! That is literally the whole of our community's assets."

(Is everyone thinking of starving the kids to death~!)

---Kuro Usagi would be extremely angry .

Under Jin's strict rejection, Asuka went into silence, showing a bitter expression.

".....980000 Kilometers? Indeed that is quite far, eh?"

Izayoi brought out a flirty smile, looking like even he had no idea.

He wanted to prevent unnecessary wastage on one hand, on the other, even if it's them, they couldn't possibly walk the distance of 25 Earths.

Jin was lacking oxygen due to continuous roaring, after taking one huge breath, he used a peaceful tone to convince everyone,

"So now, we could treat this whole matter as a joke..... We should head back right?"

"Strongly rejected."

"Agreed with the right."

"Agreed with both."

Jin disappointingly slouched his shoulders. After leaving them with such a provoking letter, they couldn't find the chance to get out of the embarrassing situation anymore. The three of them abruptly got up, grabbing Jin by his gown and started running.

"We already left the message to Kuro Usagi already, how could we retreat! You two, let's go!"

"Right! Since it's like this, we will have to struggle till the end! Discuss this with [Thousand Eyes]! Let's advance!"

"Advance."

Izayoi and Asuka started laughing heartily, exerting themselves, Kasukabe, in accordance with the atmosphere, also cried out.

As for the one wearing a loosely fitted gown called Jin, the only thing he could do was get dragged around by those three.

Part 5

Heading past the Fountain Plaza on Peribed Avenue, the four of them stopped in front of the [Thousand Eyes] branch shop. The store was located on a street filled with cherry blossom trees. Wearing a Japanese-styled apron, while holding onto a bamboo broom, the shop assistant politely addressed to everyone.

"Please leave."

"We haven't even said anything yet."

They were chased out before even entering the shop. Looks like that lady really hated the problematic children.

They would always have the habit of encountering this lady when they needed to sell precious gifts obtained from gift games to this shop. Most likely, the shop assistant hated them because of this reason.

Adjusting her hair, Asuka started arguing in protest,

"We can be counted as regulars, could you be more friendly towards us? "

"The so-called regulars are customers who ACTUALLY shopped here. Those who come here everytime to exchange things for cash aren't customers, they are simply called businessmen."

"Ahhhhh, what you said is indeed correct. Then pardon us for the intrusion."

Asuka might as well agree, she then attempted to enter into the shop quickly.

Facing with rowdy people that attempted to enter the shop, the shop assistant displayed a [Big] word, blocking the path.

Holding the bamboo broom in one hand, she exposed her cat teeth and shouted towards Izayoi and the rest,

"So! This shop politely refuses [No Name] Community! Even the shop owner has no problem, so now..."

"YAHOOO! You kids are finally here ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Unaware of where the sound was coming from, there was a white-haired kimono-wearing maiden falling from the sky.

Her tone was full of joy, as she performed acrobatic movements before having a rough landing on the ground.

Paaaaam! Following it, there were aftershocks, sending dust everywhere. The sound, as well as the person debutting, was without a doubt the white-hair kimono-wearing maiden called Shiroyasha. In fact, the person who sent the invitation letter was none other than her.

While sweeping the dirt off his uniform, Izayoi disapprovingly spoke to the shop assistant:

"Does the act of the shop owner rushing here mean she is dissatisfied with us?"

"....."

The shop assistant was busy dealing with her sudden headache, she couldn't retort to that statement.

Kasukabe gave the invitation letter to Shiroyasha instead of Asuka, who was coughing non-stop due to the scattering dust.

"Thank you for the invitation, but we don't know how to go to the Northern district..."

"Un Un, I totally understand. Please come into the shop first, if you agree to my conditions, I will be glad to pay off your transportation fee..... And I also have something to discuss with you all in private."

Shiroyasha squinted her eyes, but the last sentence she spoke was quite solemn.

The three of then looked at one another, revealing naughty smiles.

"Is it something interesting? "

"Regarding that, counted as interesting? That has to depend on you guys."

After that, the three of them happily entered the shop while dragging Jin along.

The four of them didn't enter the interior of the shop as there was business going on, they passed through the courtyard to reach Shiroyasha's room. It was well known that [Thousand Eyes] was created by a bunch of communities that gathered together, they handled all kinds of goods, they also bought gifts won from gift games for money, the money was used for the community's essentials. They could also accept huge orders if the receiving party was a large community.

After looking at the shop's interior which was quite crowded, Kasukabe murmured,

"Does this shop sell gifts?"

"Of course they do. Even Leticia bought one before. However, they can only use the gold coins issued by us to buy the gifts."

"Oh? Why?"

Izayoi asked, brimming with excitement.

Shiroyasha sat down comfortably onto the mat, "Kong!" Knocking the ash off the Japanese-style cigarette pipe, she replied,

"Basically, when issuing out currency in the Little Garden city, the coins must be of the same size. If it was something other than gifts, we would gladly accept the currency issued out by other communities, but when we are paying we would use our own currency. In other words, we can demonstrate that we [Thousand eyes] can

use currency to sell these---so called gifts. Handing the gifts to us would make us exchange even more currency, have a deeper faith and trust with the communities, naturally this is the right choice right?"

So it was like that. Izayoi nodded his head in agreement.

As the opposition's high levels were all Shura deities, they wouldn't be interested in gold and silver items.

"....Un? Since it's like this, why did you have to specially issue out your community's currency during transactions?"

"Hehe, actually we are having a certain currency circulation war with other currency-issuing communities that involves a valuable gift game, that's why the currency was engraved with our flag."

"Whoa....So that's how it is, as the monetary value of all the coins remains the same, if coins are used more times that means that the community gets more support.... Then what about the gift game? Is it worthy of a huge commercial advertisement for the community, since the current thought patterns of all the communities are the same."

Izayoi let out an envy-filled laughter.

In Little Garden city, the currency value isn't determined by gold or silver coins.

Only the flag engraved on the currency can determine its worth.

"But I understand why you had rejected the [No Name] already. In order for the circulation to occur no obstruction should happen, that's why you also chose your customers."

"Un...Yeah, that's how it is."

Shiroyasha gave an ambiguous response, ending this discussion. She must have wanted to start on the main topic already.

Izayoi sat on the tatami mat, fully aware of the reason for the end of discussion.

Shiroyasha's child-like face revealed a serious expression, "Kong", sending the soot into the red colored soot cylinder, she asked.

"Before heading towards the main topic, I'd like to inquire about something first. Since you fought with [Fores Garo], there seems to have been a rumour that you people want to get involved with the Demon Lords....Is that true?"

"Oh, that thing? Yup, it's true."

Asuka expressed her certainty while maintaining her sitting posture. Shiroyasha turned her head to face Jin.

"Jin-dono, As one of the tops of the community, do you agree to the said rumour?"

"Yes, as our name and flag was forcefully taken away, in order for us to make our community well-known, I believe this is the best plan."

Little Garden city was extremely huge. In this world where deities and other supernatural beings reside, the symbol of an organization ----Which is the [Name] and [Flag], is very important to any community. In order to fill up this gap, Jin and the rest decided to create a distinguishable community that [Fights the Demon Lords].

Shiroyasha, with a sharp expression, responded to Jin's answer.

"Do you know the dangers of that? This sort of message would attract the Demon Lords."

"I'm already prepared for that. But even if we want to restore our former glory, in our current situation, we can't even advance to the next digit. Since we won't ever have the chance to duel, we just have to attract them to attack us."

"Even if you fought with Demon Lords that had nothing to do with this, will this be alright?"

Shiroyasha moved her body closer, inquiring another question.

In response to this question, Izayoi, who was sitting beside Jin, replied while having a maniacal laugh.

"That, I have to agree with. Claiming to [Fight the Demon Lords], after beating a Demon Lord, proceeding to challenge a community with an even stronger Demon Lord----How is it? Even if we are in a world filled with Gods and supernatural beings, we wouldn't find any other community that has this much courage right?"

".....Fuuu."

Izayoi laughed jokingly but his eyes displayed seriousness. Even though this boy made others believe that he wasn't putting any serious thought into this, Shiroyasha still thought he possessed the capability to oppose Libra's strength.

Shiroyasha closed her eyes, having a deep thought about both people's viewpoints towards this matter.

After thinking for a while, she revealed a forced smile, apparently she had no other idea.

"Since you people put up this much consideration then it's fine already. If I continue to pry into this matter, I would be minding other people's business."

"Un...Thats right, Is that.....that, what exactly is the main topic today?"

"Fuu, actually the Eastern Floor Master would like to officially commission the community that wishes to [Fight Demon Lords]. So how is it, Jin-dono?"

"Ye...Yes! I will gratefully accept it!"

Shiroyasha no longer used the caring tone for the children, but changed it to the tone befitting a community's leader.

After gaining the approval, she allowed Jin to carry a carefree expression.

"Okay. Where should I start speaking...."

Kong! After Shiroyasha knocked the ash out of the smoke pipe, she paused. Allowing her gaze to wander into the courtyard, after looking at something, she suddenly recalled something, she then started speaking,

"Ahh, Oh yeah, did you know that there will be a new Northern Floor Master?"

"Eh?"

"I heard that the current floor master retired because of an illness. She must have fallen ill due to old age, as an Asian dragon, she had lived for quite a long time already. The big festival this time is to inaugurate the new [Fire Dragon] Northern Floor Master."

"Dragon?"

Both Izayoi and Kasukabe had light shining out of their eyes. Shiroyasha continued speaking while carrying a bitter smile,

"The community [Salamandra] located at the 54545 Outer Gate, is none other than the Northern Floor Master. To get back to the topic, how much do you know about the Floor Masters?"

"I know exactly nothing."

"Me too."

"I know a bit. It is those guys that are in charge of protecting the lower digit communities from Demon Lord attacks right?"

Izayoi explained while raising up his right hand, while Asuka and Kasukabe silently listened to his explanation.

[Floor Master] are the protectors of Little Garden, they also serve to promote or watch the communities grow.

They had numerous responsibilities, the main assignment was that they are in charge of the land in the Little Garden City; they also host games, measure if the lower digits communities could be promoted to a higher digit etc.

When a Demon Lord appears to disrupt the peace and causes disasters to happen, the Floor Masters have to take the initiative to lead and fight against them.

As a result, they are given huge rights and have the highest privilege [Host permissions].

"However, the Northern district contains a lot of spirits, ghosts, possessing a huge amount of strength, the land there was acknowledged as a place where demons co-exist with one another. Therefore the public security isn't that stable..."

After explaining clearly, Jin slouched down, appearing to be disheartened.

"However....It was originally like that. We used to have a pretty good relationship with [Salamandra] in the past...but I didn't know that the position of head had already

been passed down. Currently, who is the head? Is it the firstborn Sala-sama as expected? Or is it Mandra-dono?

"Nope. The current head who acquired the name of fire dragon is Sandra, the one who is of the same age as you."

"Eh?" Jin tilted his head, blinking his eyes twice.

After a moment, the shocked Jin let out an astonished cry, even his whole body shifted foward.

"Yo..You said Sandra right? Eh....Wait....Wait a moment! She's only 11 years old!"

"Aiya? But Jin-chan is our leader even though you are also 11 years old."

"Yes.....That is correct...! But, but...."

"What is it? Is the other person Chibi-chan's girlfriend?"

"No....Not.....It's not like that! Please don't say such an offending statement!"

Izayoi and Asuka were happily teasing Jin, while Jin angrily replied.

Kasukabe, who was not involved in the conversation, urged Shiroyasha to continue speaking.

"So, what do you want us to do for you?"

"Please don't be so worried. Actually this Birth of the Fire Dragon festival, simultaneously it is also the Northern District's time for Sandra's public tribute. She is still young; so, as the Eastern District Floor Master, I will collaborate this conference with her."

"Aiyo. This is such strange behavior. There are others that are in power in the Northern district right? Why can't they request the other communities to host the festival together?"

"....Un. Yeah. That is indeed the case....."

Izayoi suddenly started coughing out.

She scratched her head revealing a confused expression, at this time, Izayoi explained the reason,

"Some communities do not appreciate someone so young with that much power right?"

"Un.....Yeah, that's about it."

Asuka became unhappy once she heard that. She did not expect that corruption was involved in this implication. Her eyes were filled with anger and also a disappointed look.

"......Is that so. Even in this world, the leaders would also have the same mindset as us humans?"

"Kuku, such a harsh assessment, but it is just like you said. Therefore [Salamandra] invited me as an Eastern District Leader to conduct the festival together, also because someone could be having covert thoughts."

Shiroyasha sullenly lowered her head with a bitter expression.

Just when the solemn Shiroyasha was about to continue talking, Kasukabe Yō showed an expression as if she remembered something, she proceeded to stop her movements, then she asked.

"Wait a moment. How long is this going to last?"

"EH? Hmmm, I guess about another 1 hour at least?"

"This would be unpleasant...We would get caught by Kuro Usagi."

"!!!"

Jin, as well as the other two problematic children also realised this point. If they continue to happily waste 1 hour in the [Thousand Eyes] Shop, they would, without a doubt, get discovered by Kuro Usagi and the rest.

Currently, there were a bunch of people playing hide and seek with Kuro Usagi. After realising this point, Jin abruptly stood up.

"Shi.....Shiroyasha-sama! Please continue talking like this..."

"Jin-chan, You are not allowed to talk!"

"KAA!" Jin's chin was forcefully closed. Looks like Asuka used her gift to perform that result.

Izayoi, not missing the chance, urged Shiroyasha:

"Shiroyasha! Take us to the Northern District now!"

"Eh? Eh? I'm fine with it, but do you have anything urgent going on? Wait, it should be, are you accepting the conditions without listening to it?"

"It doesn't matter! Quick! We can discuss the particulars later, most importantly ---- This is much more interesting ! I guarantee it!"

After hearing Izayoi out, Shiroyasha widened her eyes, she then started laughing while nodding her head.

"Really? Is it that interesting? Aiyah Aiyah, this is important! Because entertainment is what I need to survive! Although I feel sorry for Jin. However, since this is more interesting this way, I guess there is no choice!"

"......?....."

Looking at Shiroyasha's naughty expression, Jin tried to utter words but to no avail. Everything was too late by then.

Izayoi and the rest happily suppressed the struggling Jin. After Shiroyasha tossed them to one side, she raised up both her hands and clapped a few times.

"----Okay, That's about it. In accordance with everyone's wishes, we have arrived in the Northern District."

".....HUH?"

The three of them, who were busy tying up Jin, leaked out fantastic sounds. Of course that reaction was as expected.

They had overcome the unimaginable 980000 kilometres----in just that short amount of time?

.....After that all those suspicions disappeared without a trace, a moment later, the three of them left the shop filled with expectations.

Part 6

-----Eastern District and Northern District Boundary Wall.

4000000 Outer Gate-3999999 Outer Gate, Thousand Eyes former branch shop.

The three of them left the shop as the warm air swept past their cheeks.

They unexpectedly moved to the [Thousand Eyes] Branch shop located on a high platform, overlooking the city. The scenery that they saw did not belong to the the sight they were used to seeing.

Asuka took in a deep breath, letting out a sigh that clearly stated that she was satisfied.

"A city with a red wall, flames.... And made out of glass?"

-----That's right, right now there was an erected, giant red wall that soared through the sky, separating the Northern and Southern district, it was clearly the Boundary wall.

They could clearly see the carvings on the ore that was a momentum on the boundary wall, as well as the 2 outer doors that merged together to form a huge and triumphant-looking wall.

Even though it was far, they could clearly see the brightly colored glass that was engraved to look like a decoration on the corridors, Asuka was so excited that both her eyes were shining.

Even though there was still daylight, the whole city appeared to look like it was already dusk. Not only because of the decorations on the city, but there were also many huge chandeliers that produced red and warm fires to illuminate the shadows cast by the boundary walls.

Looking at the scene where candlesticks that had two legs were walking about, Izayoi happily said,

"Whoa...It proved itself to be separated by 980000 kilometres from us, the cultural differences it has with us are really significant. Never thought I would see the unusual sight of candlesticks walking around!"

"Fufufu. The differences between them and us are not limited to culture only. If you go behind the outer gate there would be snow everywhere. It's because of Little Garden city's enchantment and the numerous lighting, that this scenery would always be autumn."

Shiroyasha proudly patted on her flat chest. Izayoi nodded his head while continuing to admire the city.

"Whoa. So it was because of the harsh environment that the city was developed this way right? Haha, it sounds more interesting than the Eastern district!"

".....Oh? I can't totally agree to what you said, kid. The Eastern district has a lot of great things too! It's because the outer gate you live in is especially desolate!"

Shiroyasha said with a proud feeling.

The Outer Gate of 2105380 in the Eastern District was directly facing the [Edge of the world], so the resources they could get were limited, therefore the communities did not have enough strength to develop as they suffered the restrictions.

Her heart feeling sentimental, Asuka excitingly pointed at the beautiful street view, suggesting to everyone;

"We should go there right now! I want to visit the streets filled with glass! We can, right Shiroyasha?"

"Yup, No problem at all. What I want to say can wait till night time. If you kids are free, you can participate in this gift game."

Shiroyasha pulled out an advertisement leaflet from the long sleeves of her kimono. Just when the three of them were about to look at the contents of the leaflet...

"I have finally found you~ ------ MUAHAHHAAHAHAHAHAHAAHAHAHAHAHAHAAHAHAHAHAAHHAHAHH!"

Following the loud and coarse voice produced, there was something like a bomb, rocking the earth when it landed.

A bunch of people were startled because of the sound. The one who created the large sound was none other than everyone's comrade, Kuro Usagi.

Kuro Usagi let out a large cry, using all her strength to jump, she arrived in front of everyone in a moment.

"He...Hehe.....Hehehehehehe.....Finally ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Caught up with you guys, you problematic children!"

Kuro Usagi's shallow red colored hair appeared when she was extremly agitated or angry, her whole body was continuously emiting out killing intent.

After the three problematic children realized that their very own lives were in danger, Izayoi immediately made his move.

"Quickly run away!"

"Don't you dare run!"

"Eh? Wait a moment...?"

Izayoi carried Asuka in his arms and jumped down from the platform. Kasukabe blew out a whirlwind to try and escape into the air, but was slow by a few steps. Kuro Usagi used her strength to jump, catching Kasukabe by her boots.

"Wah...Wah....!"

"Yō-san, Kuro Usagi has caught you! Kuro Usagi will never let you escape again!"

The smile on Kuro Usagi was very suspicious.

Kuro Usagi pulled Kasukabe back down, hugged her tightly, then whispered softly into her ears,

"Tonight, there will be a looooooong lecture from Kuro Usagi. Fufufu, Please thoroughly prepare yourself♪"

"Un...Understood."

Hearing a non-rejectable tone from Kuro Usagi, Kasukabe could only surrender, because her wild intuition told her that Kuro Usagi was much more frantic than usual. After that, Kuro Usagi threw Kasukabe to Shiroyasha. Whirling in the air for three and a half rounds, Kasukabe and Shiroyasha let out miserable cries.

"AGHH!"

"Whoaa! Oi...Oi! Kuro Usagi! Haven't you been quite rude lately! What's more, I'm the Eastern District Floor Master---!"

"I shall leave Yō in your care then! Kuro Usagi needs to catch the other problematic children!"

Kuro Usagi shouted while ignoring Shiroyasha's words, Shiroyasha obediently nodded her head, defeated under Kuro Usagi's imposing force.

"Oh....Is....Is that so, although I don't know what happened, but good luck, Kuro Usagi."

"Good!"

Kuro Usagi jumped down from the platform. Two hours had past since the game has started.

Kuro Usagi and the problematic children's hide and seek just entered the second half of the match.

Chapter 2

Part 1

--North-eastern Boundary Wall, Business area. Corridor with red windows.

After Izayoi and Asuka entered the corridor covered with red windows, they blended themselves into the crowd, hiding from Kuro Usagi.

Both of them were hiding in an alleyway between two shops. Popping their head out of the red-brick wall, they spied on their surroundings.

".....Not there?"

"Un, probably not. But I didn't expect her to catch up with us so quickly..."

"This means that the bait to incite Kuro Usagi's anger worked, even though it was meant as a joke, it proved to be too effective."

Confirming the area to be safe, Asuka returned back to the main street, her skirt fluttering around when she turned back her body.

"Okay, then we should start the sight-seeing. Can I trouble you with the duty of being my escort, Izayoi-kun?"

"Oh? Looking at your attitude, I thought I was too unrefined and violent for you."

"Ah? If you mind such trivial things, you will never become a fine gentleman, right?"

Both of them started laughing, throwing sarcastic comments at each other.

As they were problematic children, both of them were congenial with one another.

Izayoi stood beside Asuka, shrugging his shoulders.

"Then let me take the liberty to act as an unprofessional escort for you, Ojou-sama. I think we should stroll down this red-colored corridor since this is a business street,

it is filled with specialty or limited products, exploring here might be counted as the essence of sightseeing."

"Really? Since the unconventional Izayoi said so, it must be true then."

"Of course. Since Ojou-sama is also a girl, you might be interested in shopping right?"

".....Regarding that, maybe I like it, maybe I don't?"

A shadow flashed in Asuka's face.

Izayoi thought something was amiss, but Asuka pulled his hand and started advancing, making him lose the chance to ask.

"Okay, let's go. Maybe the shop there would sell the walking candlestick."

"Is that so...If Ojou-sama wants it, maybe I can forcefully take it from somewhere?"

"Ahhh, how could you do such things! That is just like breaking the law."

After Asuka shook her head, she revealed a mischievous and naughty smile.

"No matter what you want to get----You must first challenge a gift game and win. That is the rule of Little Garden right?"

"Haha, you're right."

When the smiling Asuka made such a declaration, Izayoi could only respond back by laughing.

Hanging such an elated expression on their faces, they started strolling down the windowed corridor that was dyed in red.

Part 2

---In an another side, the arrested Kasukabe was currently drinking tea in the branch shop of [Thousand Eyes].

This time, because she suddenly headed out, she didn't bring along the calico cat. She sat in the boxed room gazing at the scenery outside. Shiroyasha, who got wind of most things, started chatting:

"Haha, so that's what happened, this prank totally suits you guys' style, but using [Leaving] as a joke might have gone too far. Don't you think this is a little bit cruel?"

"That....Yeah, I guess it's a little bit cruel. However, Kuro Usagi was also in the wrong. If she had told us the truth that the community has no money, we wouldn't have resorted to such tough measures."

"Don't you guys realize that that happened because of the usual shenanigans you guys do?"

"That....Is.....Is quite true, but after some consideration, it is most likely the lack of trust. Letting Kuro Usagi be anxious a little bit is also good for her."

Looking at Kasukabe displaying such a rare piqued expression, Shiroyasha started laughing.

While indulging in Japanese snacks and drinking tea, they continued talking.

"Oh yeah, you mentioned once that there was a large scale gift game, is that true?"

"Of course that is true. I also hope that you will participate in that game."

"Me?"

Stuffing her mouth with snacks like a squirrel storing food, Kasukabe tilted her head, not understanding what Shiroyasha said.

Shiroyasha took out the same leaflet from her kimono, handing it to Yō.

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “Duel of the Creators”>>

Qualifications to enter and a brief summary:

***Participant needs to have a Creation-type gift**

***Participant allowed to have a helper**

***Contents of duel would change daily**

***All other gifts will be banned unless Creation-type**

Regarding gifts that are granted:

***Participants can request the [Floor Master] Fire dragon for the gifts they wish to obtain.**

Oath: *Respecting the described content, the two communities that host this Gift game based on their glory and flag.*

“Thousand Eyes” Seal

“Salamandra” Seal

"......? Creation-type gifts?"

"Yup. It refers to gifts that are created, no matter if it was created by men, spirit, gods, or stars, it would still be a creation-type gift. In order for the Northern district to bear with the harsh environment, they always pay attention to gifts that could be continuously used, hosting competitions with these type of gifts to look at the technical and artistic aspect of it. The gift that your father obtained---[Genome Tree]. No matter the technical or the art on it, it is really specific, makes it hard to believe that was created by a human. Although using it to participate in an exhibition is not that bad, but the registration is already closed. But given the [Gift] that resides in that wood carving, I think that you would be victorious in a battle that utilises strength...."

"Really?"

"Yeah, and the lucky thing is, Jin can be your helper. To make the festival more lively, I hope that you will help me by participating. Besides, the winner can obtain a strong gift.....So how about it?"

Eh~ ~ ~ Kasukabe turned her head sideways, showing no interest. Although she was quite interested towards the dragon, personally she didn't really like games----At this time, she suddenly thought of something, she then asked:

"Hey, Shiroyasha."

"Yes?"

"Can I amend my relationship with Kuro Usagi if I got the gift?"

The childish look on Kasukabe was similar to a small and cute animal.

Looking at Kasukabe making such a face, Shiroyasha couldn't help being surprised. After a moment, she nodded her head while showing a gentle and caring smile.

"If you really want to amend things with Kuro Usagi, then of course it would."

"Is that true? I shall participate then."

Kasukabe stood up while nodding her head. The sun reached it's highest point, entering high noon.

Part 3

"---This place is very beautiful, there isn't anywhere in my home that was like here."

Both of them had already strolled around casually for a few hours, the time now was about one hour after high noon.

Asuka sat near a dragon monument carving in the center of the red-windowed corridors that were festooned with red bricks and carved glass.

She wasn't feeling tired, she just wanted to relax and have a good look at the town's appearance.

In contrast, Izayoi was studying the huge emerald-colored glass that was carved to look like a monument of a dragon. He gazed at the monument, sighed while lifting his head and softly spoke:

"Whoa.....This is the first time I've seen such a huge tektite crystal."

"Tektite crystal? It's not glass?"

"Nope, tektite is a type of naturally formed glass, it is a rare mineral that is created with the energy and heat of a meteorite impact. The most famous is Germany's Nordlinger Ries meteorite."

"Germany's....Meteorite? But would there be any meteorite that would fall into the Little Garden?"

"Un, I'm also quite doubtful about this. The colors on it seems to represent the Moldavite crystal....Eh?"

Izayoi stopped his movement, he then set his sights on the billboard that showed the community that displayed the monument, what was written on it was----

"Display by Community [Salamandra]"

Title : Spirit-made tektite carving of the first community's first leader, [Sekairyuuou] Sama.

Creator : Sala

This kind of writing. After a moment of silence, Izayoi appeared to doubt his own eyes as he looked at the billboard once more.

"Spirit-made.....Hey, does that means that this is man-made tektite?"

"Wasn't it supposed to be naturally formed?"

"Yeah. But the creator technically isn't human... Eh, the creator's name is Sala, wow, this is starting to get interesting. If I remember correctly, Chibi-chan actually knows this person, if there is a chance, I would like to meet her."

Staring at the billboard, Izayoi started smiling, harboring evil intentions.

Asuka shot a view at Izayoi's face, she then abruptly asked:

"I've been wondering for quite a while...Why is Izayoi-kun so knowledgeable?"

"Not at all. You should say that I'm filled with trivia instead of being knowledgeable.....Whoa? There are walking candlesticks over there!"

After noticing the two-legged walking candlestick, Izayoi abandoned Asuka, agilely running away.

Asuka hurriedly followed. The walking candlesticks were actually art exhibits, there was a billboard with the name [Will-O'-Wisp] hanging around their neck(?).

"If there are walking candlestick and the flying lantern.....Then where is the pumpkin monster? I heard it comes out during the hallo something, have you heard of it before, Izayoi-kun?"

"Ah?"

Hearing Asuka's abrupt speech, Izayoi stopped his movement while widening his eyes.

"Oi oi, Ojou-sama you don't know too many things already. Are you referring to the Jack O' Lantern? We are already this modernised, at least even you had heard of Halloween this------Ahhhh, that's right~ Ojou-sama you were living in the period after the war right?"

Izayoi turned his upper body and asked.

Halloween was only well-known in Japan during the 1990s. Even if it was a bit earlier, it would only be known after the 1980s. That's why Asuka, who lived shortly after the war, was not too knowledgeable about this.

To Asuka, Izayoi was from the future. As foreign relations established in Japan, the knowledge about current things were quite abundant, and Izayoi just happened to have obtained all the knowledge, therefore, in Asuka's eyes, he was a very knowledgeable person.

Asuka speculated the situation by looking at Izayoi's eyes.

"Is that so.....In the period where Izayoi-kun lived, Halloween was no longer an unusual thing?"

"Thats right, does Ojou-sama like the activities related to Halloween as well?"

"I don't particularly like it, it is just that I've heard of it when I was young....I thought it was a very wonderful event."

Asuka looked at the sky, reminiscing about her past.

She formed a self-deprecating smile.

"From where I was living, it was very boring. Even though the [Financial group Ojou-sama] sounds a bit almighty.... However, the most important people, my

parents, were already gone. In addition, I had the power to control people, that's why I had to attend a boarding school, isolated from the human society."

".....Oh? That doesn't really suit your style, didn't you ever think of running away?"

"Yes, you are absolutely right! If I had not received the invitational letter, I was planning to slip away when we were going to my grandparent's house. The destination was.....right, in order to celebrate the end of the war, I was going to try and experience Halloween."

Standing at the center of the corridor, Asuka let out a funny smile. But Izayoi could feel emotions similar to sadness coming from her eyes.

In her boring and dull life that was spent being caged, she should hide her strong vision about the outside world as well as the culture.

"[Trick or Treat!] ---Don't you think these words are quite cute and wonderful? I also want to dress up as a ghost and take candy from adults carrying bitter expressions."

"Do we need to wear a big pumpkin over our heads as well?"

"Yes! Ahhhhh, right, wouldn't it be suitable if I dressed up as a witch?"

That's true, Izayoi gave such a response. Asuka turned around 360 degrees, letting her dress flutter about.

To the usually quiet Asuka, this action let her look more like a proper lady.

"I....I'm very happy that I could come to Little Garden, this is such a splendid place. Although I can't experience the rumored Halloween....But it is better than living my life in such an old place. Living here allows me to carry so much expectation towards every day."

".....Really? Then that is terrific indeed."

Izayoi was silently gazing at Asuka who was constantly turning her body 360 degrees around.

Turning, Turning----Small step, continue turning. Asuka danced until she was beside Izayoi, looking at his face. Her expression did not carry any shadows.

Izayoi replied to Asuka while carrying his trademark smile that was both provoking and mischievous.

"Okay, then we should get going! If we stay here for too long, Kuro Usagi will spot us."

"Yeah, that's right...But, Ojou-sama."

"Hmm?"

"Did you know that Halloween was originally a harvest festival?"

Eh? Asuka was momentarily stunned by that sudden question. Izayoi, ignoring it, continued speaking:

"By the way, there used to be a very huge farmland behind the [No Name] base. If we manage to restore that land, I think this would greatly benefit the community.....What do you think?"

"Yup, I know about that situation."

Asuka discussed this with Kasukabe and Lily this morning, restoring the land would greatly help the community. She then tilted her head with a puzzled face, wondering why Izayoi suddenly brought up this matter.

Izayoi grinned, bringing his face closer to Asuka, he said:

"After we restore the land....We should find a day to host our very own Halloween----What do you think about this proposal, Ojou-sama?"

"You wanted to participate in Halloween right?" Izayoi said while laughing.

Izayoi said [Our very own Halloween]-------There was only one meaning behind those words.

"In other words, you want our community------to host Halloween as a gift game right?"

"Yup, since we are currently living in Little Garden, we should personally experience getting the position as [Hosts]."

The suggestion made by Izayoi made Asuka's eyes glow, she then let out a delighted squeal.

"This proposal is indeed wonderful! Not only will we be able to help the community, it will be very interesting too!"

"Haha, Ojou-sama is indeed very understanding! So we should reserve our first time as [Host] for the Halloween gift game then. Still, we need to make some arrangements regarding that plan."

Asuka's eyes were sparkling with a warm luster, totally different from how she usually acted.

Revealing a rare shy smile, Asuka was thinking about what their future activities would look like, she then intoxicatedly muttered out:

"For us to host the Halloween activity.....Oh, we will have to first restore the land back, then we can carry out the harvest festival."

"Of course. And this proposal can be used to repay Shiroyasha's sympathy towards us, it's like killing two birds with one stone."

"Aiyah? Nevermind Kuro Usagi, but how are we going to repay Shiroyasha?"

"Hmm? Ahh, Halloween was originally a harvest festival to express gratitude towards the sun. It was actually the Celtic rituals-----Nevermind, that part isn't that important. Although the gist of thanking is different, but I don't think she would mind these kind of things."

"Is that so?" Asuka replied.

Although she couldn't understand, but since it was a festival to thank the sun, it was indeed the best method to express their gratitude towards Shiroyasha. Moreover, it wasn't only the problematic children, but even Kuro Usagi and the rest had been taken care of by her.

If there wasn't Shiroyasha, they most likely wouldn't have come to the Little Garden.

Asuka smiled in agreement. The number of reasons to thank Shiroyasha and Kuro Usagi were off the charts.

"Oh yeah, the goal now is for us to be [Hosts] that can be qualified to satisfy Shiroyasha."

"Even if we say that, we can't do anything now. Firstly we must win all types of gift games."

"Of course. Since this is such a huge festival, there are lots of wonderful gift games."

"YES! The festival is currently hosting two major gift games, competition using [Creation-type gifts]!"

"Creation-type? Do we need to do something? "

"Yes! For example, Kasukabe-san's [Genome Tree] is one of those! No matter if it is man-made, spirit-made, god-made, or star-made, you can participate in this game if you have any type of creation-type gifts♪"

"Oh? Even though I can't really understand it, but will we get wonderful gifts?"

"Why, yes! Since we can receive the gifts directly from the new Floor Master Sandra-sama, of course it would be wonderful!"

"Really? Then shouldn't we contact Kasukabe-san, invite her to join? Sorry to bother but could you please pass on this message to her, Kuro Usagi?"

"....."

"YES! Leave this to Kuro Usagi♪ Also, Kuro Usagi should get going, so could both of you surrender yourselves unconditionally?"

Kuro Usagi asked with an amazing yet imposing manner, both of them immediately replied:

"REJECTED!"

At this moment, Izayoi was already starting to sprint off in a fast manner. When Asuka was about to escape, she was pounced on by a flying blonde vampire wearing a maid uniform, Leticia, who restrained her.

"Ah!"

"Hehe, you should give up hope and accept your fate, Asuka."

Leticia kept back her black wings, hugging Asuka tightly while smiling.

Asuka raised both her hands as a declaration of surrender, but not before shouting out to Izayoi:

"Izayoi-kun! You are the last one! If you are caught easily, I will not forgive you!"

"Understood! Ojou-sama, leave it to me!"

Wahahahahaha! Izayoi replied while running through the red-windowed corridors. As a [Highborn of Little Garden], Kuro Usagi was not inferior, she had physical strength that wouldn't pale to most gods in comparison.

"Where are you going to run! Kuro Usagi has had it with you! After Kuro Usagi has caught you, Kuro Usagi will invite everyone to attend Kuro Usagi's beautiful lecture!"

"Ha! What a lovely suggestion there! If you want me to join Indra's dependants Kobo assembly, then catch me first!"

Izayoi then increased his speed. He wasn't running in a straight line anymore, he used the building as a board to jump, arriving on the top of a minaret group. Not wanting to admit defeat, Kuro Usagi ran vertically on the wall, chasing after him.

Crowds who noticed the commotion pointed at Kuro Usagi and shouted:

"Look! It's a rabbit! The [Moon Rabbit] chasing after someone!"

"What is the [Highborn of Little Garden] doing in the lower floors?"

"Did it come down from the upper floors to congratulate Sandra-sama's inauguration ceremony?"

Ignoring the stares from the crowd, Kuro Usagi arrived on top of a roof.

Izayoi and Kuro Usagi stared at each other, maintaining their distance.

".....Let me confirm the rules. If you catch me, it's your win. If I'm not caught today, I win. Is that right?"

"YES. Kuro Usagi will properly discipline you once you are caught, and if Izayoi-san finally escapes---"

"Oh yeah, I was about to talk about that. Actually half the content in the letter was actually a joke."

"Ah~? Is it like that~? So everyone was merely joking, but to use [Leave the community] as a bet? It really is a joke that isn't even funny."

Kuro Usagi mercilessly stared at Izayoi. Looks like this was the reason behind her anger.

Indeed, if one was to casually treat [Leave the community] these kind of words as lenient, there would bound to be disorder in the command chain of the community. Even if they were close, they should maintain proper etiquette. To Izayoi and the others, the prank this time was simply too evil.

Maybe Izayoi had already known the answer in his heart, he smiled while shrugging his shoulders.

"Hmmm, what you said was indeed correct. Using this as a joke has gone too far. If it was a prank that wasn't able to make people laugh by the end of it, it definitely would be uninteresting. That I have to agree to."

".....That means that you will surrender unconditionally?"

"What stupid things are you saying. If we simply did nothing when the atmosphere around us has intensified this greatly, how would the crowd accept it?"

Izayoi pointed somewhere below his feet. There were crowds that gathered due to the commotion, they lifted their heads to face them while nosily shouting things. It was simply a rare sight to actually see a [Highborn of Little Garden], which Kuro Usagi was.

"So I have a proposal. How about we host a fairly short game between us?"

"Eh?"

"Hmmmm, let's treat this as an apology, you don't have to bet anything. Regarding my bet---Eh~ What do you want? How about earning the right to freely command me for one time?"

"Eh----?"

Kuro Usagi was so shocked that she was startled. Because of the surprise, even her rabbit ears couldn't help but stand up.

If one could get the person who overwhelmed the heavens and the earth to obediently obey an order, everyone would want that reward ---However, Kuro Usagi depressingly shook her head.

"That.....That won't do, Izayoi-san."

"Ah? Then should we bet using money? If you find my small amount of money acceptable."

"No.....That's not it. Kuro Usagi can understand Izayoi-san's regret. But....But, I think that Kuro Usagi is not right in her mind, so if we want the gift game to proceed.... Then both parties should have the same conditions applied."

This time Izayoi was the one who widened his eyes in shock.

In other words, Kuro Usagi also wants to use the free command as a bet together with Izayoi.

"The gift games can only be conducted when both parties agree. Even if Kuro Usagi wins the gift game involving the punishment, Kuro Usagi won't have a sense of accomplishment. So if we want to play, it must be fair! Kuro Usagi will definitely give Izayoi-san a wonderful lecture!"

".....HAHAHA! Even the trivial Kuro Usagi would say something this arrogant."

Izayoi laughed maliciously, then the playfulness in his eyes faded away. Betting one's own will as the outcome of a game. Since each side hoped for it, naturally they should use their full strength to challenge.

The final round of the match of hide and seek between the problematic children and Kuro Usagi was about to begin.

Part 4

Asuka and Leticia went to the opposite direction of the massive crowd that was gathered near the center.

Both of them got hungry after all the running, so they bought crêpes at a stall, Asuka gave the crêpe a look as if she saw something rare. Leticia looked at Asuka puzzledly while taking a small bite out of her crêpe.

"Have you not seen a crêpe before, Asuka?"

"Eh? Yeah. On the outside is a warm skin, yet on the inside it is filled with cold confectioneries. Although it looks delicious..... it's quite unrefined to bite down on it just to eat it. The mouth would be bound to get dirty no matter the effort to try and stop it."

"Really ? But I really like the feeling of the sweet and thick sauces sliding and then spreading in my mouth after I bite apart the warm skin."

"Hearing a vampire describe that would definitely make anyone get goosebumps."

Asuka let out a look of grimace. When she was still thinking about how she should eat the crêpe, Leticia was licking her fingers, having finished her crêpe.

"Nevermind, a lot of people who came into the Little Garden were just like you. Everything was different from their homes, for example, food, buildings, mindset, culture etcetera.... Once you can accept this, then you can be integrated into the Little Garden. To conclude something just because of it's appearance is not good, after all having life experience is a very valuable treasure."

"I.....I understand."

Having decided, Asuka opened her mouth and bit down on it-----But she overdid it.

The banana and chocolate gushed out of the crêpe, staining the side of her mouth. Asuka momentarily frowned, but the sweetness in her mouth wasn't all that bad. She licked her fingers after wiping it off her mouth.

".....It's good."

"That's good. If you faltered just by this type of food, then you definitely cannot go to the Southern district."

"Rea.....Really? Is the food in the Southern district that amazing?"

"Amazing is just one of it's traits. Overall, the food there are all very wild. In the past I went to the restaurant ran by the [Six Scars] community, that was simply too weird. Cut! Barbeque! Bite! When they told me these three steps are for eating, even I would have a headache."

Leticia's eyes seemed to drift off to somewhere far, reminiscing about her memories seemed to make her quiver.

Asuka gave a bitter smile towards Leticia's reaction, while proceeding to round two of the challenge. At this time, her line of sight spotted a small shadow hiding at a corner. At a shop selling flower vases, there was a something wearing a pointy hat.

"Leticia-san, what...Is that?"

Hmm? Leticia turned her head to face the direction where Asuka was pointing at. After that she widened her eyes in surprise.

The direction where the finger was pointing----There was a dwarf looking girl as small as a palm wearing a pointy hat, she was attentively watching the flower vases.

"That should be a faerie right? It's rare to see it alone when it is this size. Is it a [Stray]?"

"[Stray]?"

"Yup, those kind of miniature faeries usually travel in flocks, it's rare that it would move independently."

Really? After Asuka replied, she curiously leaned close to the pointy-hat wearing faerie.

Probably because of Asuka's looming shadow that blocked the light from reaching the faerie, she was startled and turned her head to face Asuka.

Both of them stared at one another.

"....."

"Ah!" After a moment, the faerie let out a cute sound before turning her body and running away.

Asuka gave her crêpe to Leticia before chasing after the small back of the faerie.

"Wah! Asu.....Asuka!"

"The rest of the crêpe, you can have it! I'm chasing after her for a bit!"

Asuka happily chased the pointy-hat wearing faerie. This reaction was understandable. Probably because of the problematic children's habit, they would naturally think about chasing the opposing side if they ran.

Leticia leaked a puzzled smile, parting with Asuka's back while biting into the crêpe.

Part 5

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “Kuro Usagi and Izayoi”>>

Rules:

***The tossing of a coin to signify the start of the game.**

***The winner is decided when the participant grabs the other person with their "Palm"**

***The loser will be forced to accept the winner's order for one time.**

Oath: ***Regarding the above mentioned rules, "Kuro Usagi" and "Izayoi" will start the gift game.***

After both of them pledged their vows, a parchment appeared on their hands.

"This isn't conflict within communities, but a [Geass roll] used for individual duels. After the winner is announced, the winner's paper will have the rights to command, while the loser's paper will be burned."

"Whoa....?"

Izayoi read the parchment again with a curious expression, then he started laughing.

"Wow, this is not bad. So when the coin has dropped down to the ground, it means the start of the game right?"

"YES. The privilege of tossing the coin should be given to you then."

"......Oh? You seem to be quite certain."

"YES. Because in this gift game, no matter the development it will be favourable for Kuro Usagi."

Kuro Usagi wasn't boasting at all, as this was a solid fact. Izayoi kept his smile and took out the coin, leisurely moving while speculating about Kuro Usagi's first move.

(Our speed should be around the same right? Regarding strength, I would be more outstanding but this game does not need the usage of strength. So the main problem now is Kuro Usagi's high performance rabbit ears.)

The conditions for winning was to catch the other person. Only running was needed, so there was no need for physical strength.

In comparison with Izayoi, Kuro Usagi had a pair of high performance rabbit ears. Kuro Usagi's ears could receive the information of the game when she was a referee, it was an even bigger threat as Kuro Usagi can use the ears because she was a participant.

(In this way, I can speculate that there will be three types of first moves she would make. Two of them will be dangerous for me.)

To control the situation of a game, firstly they would have to use their trump card as the main force, this was the basic out of the basics.

But the devastating thing is, the opponent has already found out about my strengths. Furthermore, the game counters the need of using my trump card. And if Kuro Usagi has information power, then regarding her becoming the Queen card or the Main, it will all be too useful.

But even with that, Izayoi still tosses the coin without fear, using all his concentration ability to focus on the sound that signifies the start of the game.

(I would have to bet on this first move! Come on, show me what you can do, Kuro Usagi!)

Izayoi let out a frivolous smile, looking at the coin that produced a metal sound after been tossed in the air.

Kuro Usagi had a nervous expression, staring at the coin that was in the sky displaying a smooth arc.

....Kang! Immediately after the metal sound resounded, both of their figures disappeared from the crowds' eyes, only the sound of the explosive action they made remained. The crowd immediately started a commotion.

"Disappeared!" "Where did they run off to?" "There! [Moon Rabbit] is running backwards while facing the human!"

Kuro Usagi used all her strength to jump backwards. Izayoi already knew that Kuro Usagi would jump towards the back. He was consecutively jumping on the minaret group's roof that had little foothold, stepping on the wide-angle slope to chase Kuro

Usagi. Kuro Usagi couldn't help but happily laugh when she saw Izayoi's movements.

"Ara ara, I was spotted?"

"Ha! Of course!"

Izayoi agitatedly replied. To Kuro Usagi, this chase was overwhelmingly favourable to her. Although Izayoi didn't know, but the rabbit ears were connected to the central system of the Little Garden, she could sense the whole range of the game when she was a referee, as a participant she could receive information within a radius of a kilometre.

During the chase, this was a very huge chance. Since Kuro Usagi could track Izayoi's position or movement, and both of their speeds were equal, Izayoi would not have a chance of winning. In other words, for Izayoi to win this game, the first condition is, never [lose track of Kuro Usagi].

So when the game started he sprinted at full strength. The worst thing that could have happen was that both of them bolted straight and rammed into each other, thus this method had a 50-50 win rate. Since all other options were exhausted, Izayoi held onto his luck and ran straight.

Kuro Usagi moved to the right of the minaret group's center, jumping unto a huge bell tower. Izayoi also chased after her.

After the crowd saw both of them climbing unto the huge bell tower, they cheered for the match that exceeded everyone's expectation.

"How.....How strong! This is the strength of a [Moon Rabbit]?"

"But the guy chasing after her is also good! Who exactly is he?"

In a blink of an eye, Kuro Usagi was already on the spire of the bell tower.

The chasing Izayoi unhappily shouted at Kuro Usagi.

"Oi! Kuro Usagi! I keep thinking that I'm able to see up your skirt but I can't! What the hell is going on?"

"Aiyaa? That's the reason why you were so unhappy?"

Kuro Usagi pressed down her skirt while giving the chasing Izayoi a smile. Actually the garter belt and the mini-skirt were both made by a magical fabric.

"He-He♪ Thanks to Shiroyasha being wonderful, this uniform was blessed with a gift that 'looks like you can see the contents of the skirt but you can't', you can say it's an impregnable fortress-like mini-skirt♪"

"What? That bastard! Does she want to reveal her skin that badly! Darn it! Looks like I must directly put my head in the skirt...."

"Quiet! You idiot!"

Kuro Usagi rejected the idea at top speed. This guy would really do what he says, so it was quite scary.

Kuro Usagi stood on the top of the spire, at that height she could see the base of the boundary wall.

She stuck out her tongue at Izayoi who was below her, leaking out her sly smile, she raised up her right hand and announced.

"However, the time for stupid words will end now."

"What?"

"Kuro Usagi has won this game already, Izayoi-san."

Kuro Usagi suddenly announced that she would win. After that she hugged her leg and jumped down.

Facing Kuro Usagi who was planning on falling to the ground, Izayoi realised that he made a huge mistake.

(Shit! I messed up! If I chase her now I will definitely be caught!)

Even though he could break apart mountains and rivers, Izayoi did not have the ability to fly.

If he followed Kuro Usagi and jumped down, the winner will be decided while in the air.

To give an example, this was like pitchers and hitters. Since the ball can only fly straight, the opposition will not make a mistake in hitting the ball. If he took a detour and didn't chase, Kuro Usagi would hide. If that happened, he would've lost. Izayoi always had to have jumped at the same time as Kuro Usagi, but it was too late now.

"So, I guess this is goodbye then~♪"

The overly elated Kuro Usagi faced Izayoi while waving her hand. Izayoi had to quickly make a decision.

'Shoot, if I lose her I will lose.....! Must I really jump?'

But then where should I Jump? 10 metres away? Now? No, she would definitely catch me at this distance. And if it was too far then I would lose her. Izayoi kept thinking of different situations, thinking about which good place should he land, he suddenly thought of something, dismissing all other thoughts as [Boring].

"......You are really quite something eh, Kuro Usagi. Although simple, your methods of controlling the flow of the game are quite interesting."

I will confirm this, it has been too long since I've experienced such an interesting game. Izayoi said while laughing.

No matter how well you control the game, winning and losing is another thing----- Izayoi happily laughed. If Kuro Usagi has the ability to calculate opportunities, then let her calculate. If the enemy is escaping, then let her run like how rabbits are supposed to.

Using his strength to utterly destroy people's smart and devious plans, was totally Sakamaki Izayoi's style.

"Sorry, it's time for me to control the game. Prepare to cry as you watch my bold and beautiful actions, Kuro Usagi...!"

Izayoi twisted his body like a flexible and elastic iron wire, he then kicked the base of the bell tower.....[Using his full strength].

".....Eh? Ah.... Wait..... Wait a moment! You big idiot ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~!"

The usually jumpy Kuro Usagi couldn't help but let out a frantic cry after looking at Izayoi's violent actions.

The rubble from the bell tower fell down at the speed of one third of a mile, because Kuro Usagi was quite far away from the crowd, so there wouldn't be any casualties, however, the red-windowed corridor got hit by the wreckage that was like a bomb.

"That.....That human is crazy!"

The crowd started to let out frantic cries. Of course they would. As the Little Garden was filled with deities, only the [Demon Lords] would do something as despicable as destroying things on the lower floors.

Kuro Usagi was forced to stop so as to avoid the debris. At this time, there was a 'Wahahaha' coming from the rear of the rubble.

"I.....Izayoi-san....!"

"You entered into my range already, Kuro Usagi!"

Izayoi kicked away the falling wreckage, he then stretched out his right hand from the shadows. In a nick of time, Kuro Usagi pushed away Izayoi's right hand, she then also stretched out her right hand. Izayoi narrowly avoided the hand, he then tried to hold onto Kuro Usagi again.

In the short time where the rubble was on the ground, both of them were relentlessly using their hands for both offense and defense.

When they were putting all their concentration in attacking, the top of the bell tower started to collapse onto their heads.

This was the deciding outcome of the game. Both of them waved their fist to send the collapsed bell tower flying.

After wasting some time doing these actions, their defensive action slowed down. Both of them stretched out their hands----

"Ah."

And grabbed onto to each other's arms.

Both of their [Geass roll] started glowing, deciding the winner.

[Outcome: Draw. "Geass roll" can be used by both parties]

".....Huh?"

Still grabbing onto Kuro Usagi's hand, Izayoi let out a surprised shout. Kuro Usagi bitterly explained:

"Ah.... About this. Because it was a draw, So both of us get the right to command the other person."

"This situation is good either way, I don't really care. What I'm unhappy about is this [Draw] result, no matter how you see it I was faster right?"

"No No, the Little Garden's decision is final."

"Huh? The god that judged this must be kidding me AHHH I want to question that person who judged this unfairly so bring that person to me quickly, you damn rabbit---!"

"That's enough! You scoundrels!"

At this time, there was a booming voice coming from the corridors. Both of them were surrounded by Lizard-men, carrying the design of a flame dragon. Northern district [Floor master] ----Community [Salamandra] arrived because of the commotion. Kuro Usagi helplessly raised up both her hands, quietly surrendering.

Chapter 3

Part 1

------Boundary wall, Stage area. [Rise of the Dragon] Operation Headquarters.

Izayoi and company were brought to the [Salamandra] base, arriving at the headquarters in charge of hosting the [Rise of the Dragon] festival. In order to reach the headquarters, it was necessary to head to the palace and game venue that are directly linked together, whilst passing through the stone trail.

As the auditorium is set up along the outline of the circular-looking game venue, it portrayed the image of the place being surrounded. The auditorium was currently hosting the game that was listed in Shiroyasha's leaflet, and a duel to determine the contestant to advance to the finals was being held.

"*Ojooooooou!!!!!! Take advantage now! Go to the back of the opponent and give him a flying kick!*"

Following Leticia to the Northern district, the calico cat was currently shouting, doing it's role as a helper. The battle on the stage was held between [No Name]'s Kasukabe Yō and part of the community [Rock Eater]'s mobile doll, Stonewall giant.

"This way.....The winner will be decided...!"

Kasukabe flew to the back of Stonewall giant by manipulating the whirlwind which she got from the griffon as a gift, kicking it's hindbrain. Furthermore, while it was being hit, Kasukabe turned her body weight into an [Elephant], in accordance with the falling kinetic energy, slammed the giant into the ground. The spectators erupted into deafening cheers after the Stonewall giant was brought to the ground.

"*Ojooooooou! Uooooooh! Ojooooooou!*"

The calico cat cheered loudly for the heroic Kasukabe. To others, calico cat sounded like he was continuously meowing, but Kasukabe understood what he had said. Kasukabe cast her sight to look at calico cat, raising up her hand, she smiled.

After Shiroyasha, who was sitting at the top of the palace, clapped her hands twice, the crowd's cheers instantly died down. Standing on the palace balcony, Shiroyasha let out a hearty laughter, facing Kasukabe and the crowd, she started speaking:

"The winner of this match is [No Name]'s Kasukabe Yō. Therefore, the final participant to participate in the finals will be revealed shortly. The finals will be scheduled for tomorrow, regarding the rules for tomorrow's game ..... Un, I'll entrust the rules to the other [Host], who is this festival's guest of honor, to explain it to everyone."

Shiroyasha turned back her body, letting the person sitting in the center of the palace balcony appear. From the balcony that could see the whole stage, a person could be seen wearing multi-layered colorful bright garment, whose bright red hair was tied to the back of her head.

She was the pureblood of a dragon------Stellar Sea Dragon King, the newly appointed [Floor Master].

The young leader of the community [Salamandra] was Sandra, who stood up from her seat.

Shiroyasha revealed a tender smile, softly urging Sandra who was wearing ostentatious clothes as well as a nervous expression.

"Haha, I understand that you are nervous, but you must always maintain your smile in front of everyone. A floor master is supposed to be every community's emotional support. Moreover, if your expression still remains that stiff, the costume as well as you will lose elegance. It is necessary to display a determined attitude now."

"Ye.....Yes!"

Sandra took in a deep breath, with a clear and melodious voice filled with determination, she addressed the crowd.

"Hello everyone, I'm the Northern district master as previously introduced, Sandra Doltrake. This [Rise of the Dragon] festival that is co-hosted with the Eastern district, has successfully passed half of it's schedule. This time there isn't anything special that is worth mentioning, therefore I would like to use this chance to thank the Northern district communities and the Eastern district communities for assisting in this festival. In regards to the game tomorrow, everyone should refer to the invitational letter beside your hands."

One by one, the audience picked up the invitational letter.

The ink on it was broken down into straight lines and curves, which then started constructing into a passage.

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “Duel of the Creators”>>

Communities involved in the finals:

***Game leader : "Salamandra"**

***Participant : "Will-O'-Wisp"**

***Participant : "Rattenfänger"**

***Participant : " No Name "**

Rules in the finals:

***Competition using gifts created by respective communities.**

***In order to allow the gift to be utilized to its full effect, a helper is allowed.**

***Only the participants that are registered are allowed into the game.**

***Using the round robin format, the community that won the most battles would be the winner.**

***The Winner can challenge the game leaders to a duel.**

Regarding gifts that are granted:

***Participants can request the [Floor Master] Fire dragon for the gifts they wish to obtain.**

Oath: *Respecting the described content, the two communities that host this Gift game based on their glory and flag.*

“Thousand Eyes” Seal

“Salamandra” Seal

After this, the festival came to an end.

The sun began to set, casting a shadow on the boundary wall which was gradually enveloping the whole city. After that, the moonlight shined into the red walls of the city, with only a huge chandelier as the road sign, flickering with it's lights. The evil spirits and the Rakshasa demons that resides in this town that just turned night, started waking up.

Part 2

"Looks like you two caused quite a commotion eh."

"Yeah, I was just heating up the festival's atmosphere, just like you requested."

"Don't be so proud in saying that! You Baka-sama!"

"Paa!" Kuro Usagi used the paper fan to whack Izayoi. Behind them, Jin was busy dealing with his massive headache.

After those two were arrested, they were brought into an audience room in the operation headquarters.

Shiroyasha was trying to show a serious face while fighting back her urges to smile. Since Sandra was also inside the room, Shiroyasha could not do anything that was unfitting of her identity.

There was a man dressed in military uniform which looked like Sandra's confidant. He put on a high-pressured attitude and took a step forward, using his sharp eyes to stare down Izayoi.

"Heh! You are merely No-names, yet you dare to cause such a commotion at our festival! You should be prepared to face the severe consequences of your actions!"

"That's enough Mandra, this matter should be decided by your leader, Sandra."

Shiroyasha warned the person called Mandra.

Sandra stood up from the luxurious seat in the audience room, she then told Kuro Usagi and Izayoi:

"[Highborn of Little Garden] and allies, I'm glad that you all could participate in the [Birth of the Fire Dragon Festival]. Regarding the building that you two destroyed, Shiroyasha has agreed to help repair it. Fortunately there weren't any casualties, therefore I've decided not to pursue this case anymore."

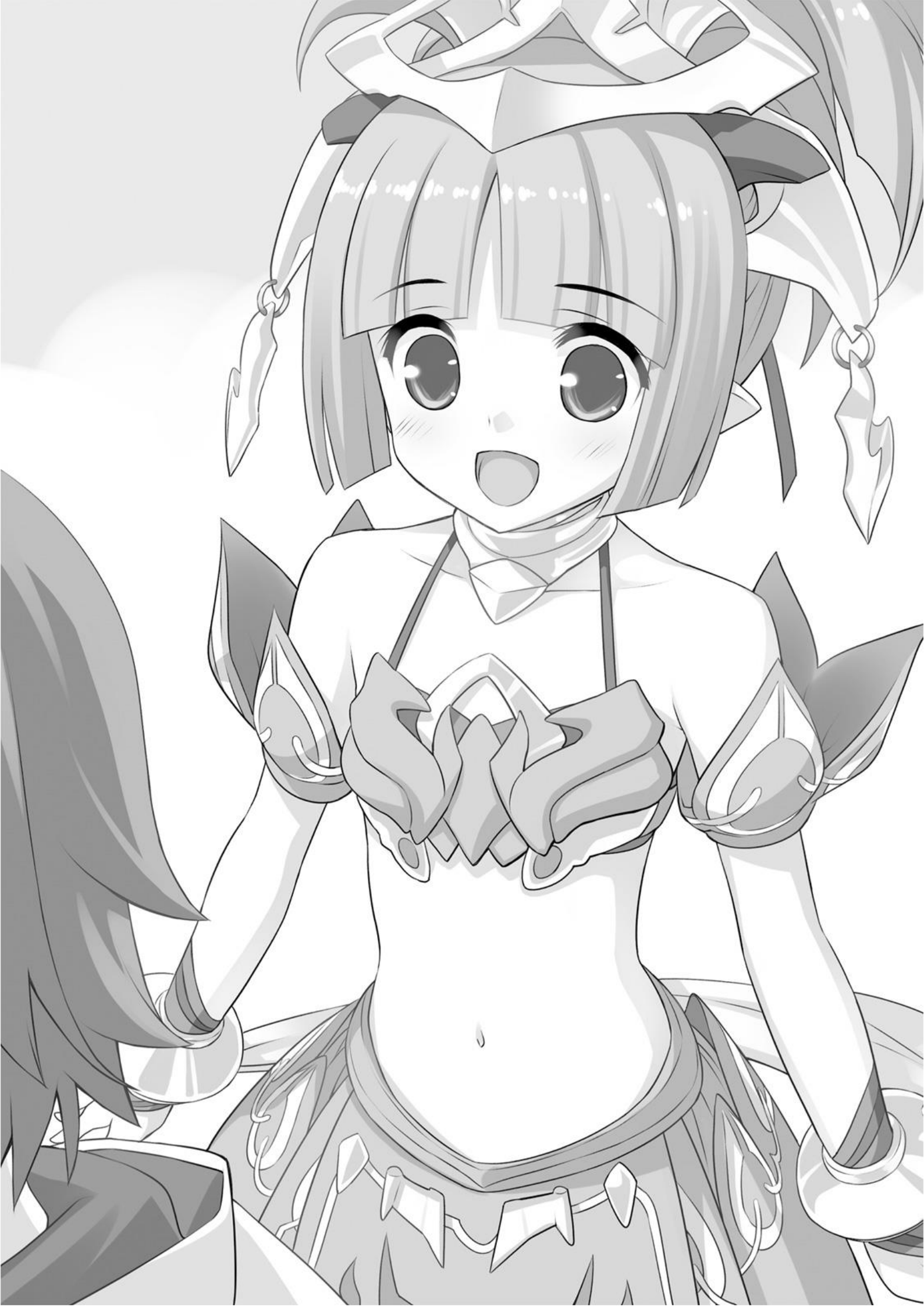
Mandra angrily clicked his tongue. Izayoi accidentally spat out some words:

"Oh? That is quite lenient."

"Yeah, it's because I invited you guys to help me, the fact that nobody got hurt was a blessing in disguise. Based on the reasons above, you can pay the travel and repair fees as deposit first."

Kuro Usagi touched her chest, breathing a sigh of relief while Izayoi gently shrugged his shoulders.

".....Oh, since this is a nice chance, we should continue what we discussed this morning."



Nodding her head, Shiroyasha and Sandra dismissed everyone in the audience room besides Mandra. The only people besides those three left in the room were Izayoi, Kuro Usagi and Jin.

After everyone left, Sandra immediately changed her serious attitude and tone, rushing towards Jin, she revealed a youthful and cute smile.

"Jin! Long time no see! When I heard that your community got attacked, I was very worried!"

"Thanks, it's good to see you look so spirited."

Jin replied, wearing a smile. Sandra then showed a shy smile towards Jin.

"Hehe, of course. After I heard that a Demon Lord attacked your community, I wanted to visit you but Otou-san suddenly fell sick and to follow suit the inauguration ceremony, I couldn't find any time to visit."

"That can't be helped, but I really did not expect Sandra-san to be the Floor Master---"

"Don't you address her name with such insolence, you nameless brat!"

When Jin and Sandra were having their reunion talk, Mandra suddenly bared his teeth, unsheathing his sword and swung it towards Jin. Moments before the sword came into contact with Jin's neck, Izayoi used the sole of his shoes to take the blow.

Izayoi kicked the sword back to it's owner, although he was still wearing that frivolous smile, his eyes clearly displayed hostility.

He gave out a sharp gaze that seems to be able to cut anything that set their sights on him.

".....Oi! Since this is a casual greeting between two parties that know each other, you have gone too far. You weren't even planning on holding back were you?"

"Of course not! Sandra is already the Northern District's master! To respond with such unruly and rude behavior even though we invited the [No Name] community to attend this festival and also took such leniency towards your actions, it would damage [Salamandra]'s reputation! You [No Name] trash!"

Izayoi and Mandra glared daggers at each other while Sandra frantically tried to stop them.

"Man....Mandra-niisama! They used to be [Salamandra]'s allies! It's not courteous to use that attitude to treat them like this when we were the ones who selfishly broke off the treaty of alliance with them."

"Who cares about courtesy, our reputation is more important! I've said this before, but we are always looked down upon by others because you keep saying those kind of words...."

"That's enough, it's time you back off, Mandra."

Shiroyasha used a dismissive tone to advise Mandra to back off. However, not only did Mandra refuse to back down, he also stared back at Shiroyasha.

"[Thousand Eyes] should mind their own business! Even an ultra vie like you should have some form of abstinence! [Beasts of the South, Faeries of the North, Failures of the East] this phrase was said magnificently. Regarding the rumors, it must have been planned by the Eastern district who was jealous of the Northern district right?"

"Mandra-niisama! Please have some self-control!"

Sandra, who couldn't take it anymore, denounced Mandra, who had spoken too much.

The [No Name] company, who didn't know what was going on, could only tilt their heads while looking at each other.

"Oi, what is the rumor about, is it related to why you needed our assistance?"

Saying "Yeah", Shiroyasha looked around to see who was currently present, before taking out a letter.

"The reason why I wanted your assistance is written in this letter.....you can confirm it yourselves."

With a surprised look, Izayoi took the letter and started reading the contents written in it.

"....."

After confirming what was written inside the letter, the usual frivolous smile Izayoi carried disappeared.

This unimaginable action that Izayoi did, caused Kuro Usagi to be shocked, before jumping to the back of Izayoi.

"Izayoi-san.....? What is written on it?"

"See it yourself."

Speaking with a undulate and rare tone, Izayoi passed the letter to Kuro Usagi who was behind him.

What was written on the letter was these words:

[There will be a [Demon Lord] attack during the Birth of the Fire Dragon festival.]

".....Eh....."

Kuro Usagi was momentarily stunned, before producing a shriek-like sound. Reading the contents next was Jin, who also did the same as Kuro Usagi.

Izayoi was the only one who could still remain calm, with an expressionless look, he asked Shiroyasha:

"To be honest this is quite unexpected. I thought it was a topic related to people fighting to get the rights to be the master."

"What!"

Mandra snarled angrily while the one trying to stop him was Sandra. Ignoring the two, Shiroyasha continued speaking:

"I won't apologize okay! It was you guys who willingly accepted this request before hearing the conditions."

"That is indeed true.....Okay, what do you want us to do? If you want me to take the Demon Lord's head, I'll be glad to do so! But I'm quite curious about this letter."

"Yeah, then I should start the explanation with the letter first."

Shiroyasha gave Sandra a look, hoping that she agreed to let her leak out confidential information.

After Sandra nodded her head, Shiroyasha started explaining with a serious expression:

"Firstly, regarding this letter, it was a top member of [Thousand Eyes] who recorded a prophecy."

"Prophecy?"

"Yup. Just so you know, [Thousand Eyes] has lots of gift users that can use the special [Magic Eyes]. And in the wide range of users, it also includes gift users who could [Predict the future]. The person from Demon of Laplace who foresaw the prophecy gave a present to the festival, which happens to be the prophecy of the [Demon Lord's attack]."

"So that's what it is! Which means it is a gift for foreseeing the future. Then, how much can we rely on this prophecy?"

"As reliable as throwing something up and it falling down."

The analogy that Shiroyasha gave let Izayoi have a doubtful expression.

".....Is that even a prophecy? If you throw something up of course it would fall down."

"It's a prophecy alright. The reason is, the person can see things clearly like [Who threw it], [How was it thrown], [Why was it thrown] and other factors. So, naturally he can deduce [Where will it fall], right? These kind of things are his type of prophecy."

"What?" Izayoi let out a shout that seemed to say that he had enough. Kuro Usagi and the rest were speechless to this fact, especially Mandra, who was so shocked that his lower jaw drooped. This reaction was to be expected.

Mandra, whose face was red, roared:

"Stop.....stop joking! Since you know that much information yet only tell us that we will have a Demon Lord attack, this must be some nonsense meant to provoke us! Get out and scram back into your nest!"

"Nii.....Nii-sama ....! This fact Shiroyasha-sama is saying was supposed to be hidden ....!"

Sandra kept trying to appease the angry Mandra.

Covering her face with the fan, Shiroyasha ignored his actions and stared into the distance.

After Izayoi digested the information he received, he confirmed everything and asked Shiroyasha:

"So that's what it is, we already uncovered the culprit leading the trouble..... But, we can't reveal the name to the public?"

"Yeah...."

Shiroyasha gave out a vague response.

Izayoi revised the semantics, he then strongly questioned:

"Regarding this matter, in order to let the [Demon Lord] make it's debut, there is some counsel that's planning it ---- And that counsel [Can't make a public stand], is that right?"

Jin made an "Ahh" sound, he then looked towards Sandra.

Before coming to the Northern district, the words that they previously discussed with Shiroyasha appeared...

"Some communities do not appreciate someone so young with that much power."

If that said person was [Because of scruple and wasn't able to make a public stand], Then---

"What you mean is.....There is a possibility that there is another Floor master that is collaborating with a [Demon Lord], to attack [Rise of the Dragon] festival right?"

The words Jin said echoed in the audience room, this was such a taboo term that not even anyone could imagine it.

[Floor Masters] were supposed to be protectors of order, but trying to break the order.

Shiroyasha gave a deep sigh while shaking her head.

"That is still uncertain. This matter came as direct orders from my boss, and prophets were supposed to keep the secrets stored up deep in their hearts. Therefore I'm not certain about this.... But, we can't deny the fact that the Northern masters are not co-operating with Sandra's inauguration, after all the co-operation was left with the

Eastern masters like me. If the Northern masters had some sort of mysterious connection with the [Demon Lord's attack]..... Then this is could be a grave situation."

Shiroyasha softly pondered, while Kuro Usagi and Jin were left speechless.

Izayoi tilted his head, giving the look like he did not understand what was being said.

"Is this kind of situation that rare?"

"Eh?"

"Stop..... stop saying it's strange, this is the worst kind of situation! The Floor Masters are supposed to protect the communities from Demon Lord attacks! Which means that they are directly opposed to a Demon Lord attack!"

"But no matter what, the masters at least have a brain right? To believe that they won't harbor schemes just because they are responsible for maintaining peace and order, isn't that just a messed-up illusion?"

Izayoi's face displayed a contempt and unconcerned face. In his original world, people who were entrusted with changing the laws and then deviate from their political views to conspire schemes wasn't anything rare. Izayoi came from the time where anyone would be disappointed. Aware of this, Shiroyasha quietly closed her eyes and shook her head.

"Hmmmmm, that is indeed reasonable. If that is the case, as a keeper of peace, I'll definitely find that person and sanction him."

"But the current enemy mentioned in the prophecy is the [Demon Lord], therefore I hope that everyone would assist me in cracking the Demon Lord's game."

Hearing Sandra's remark, everyone nodded their heads in agreement.

Since there was a prophecy about a Demon Lord's attack, this was [No Name]'s first job.

After understanding the situation, Jin declared loudly with a serious expression:

"I understand, in response to the [Demon Lord's attack], [No Name] will lend their assistance to the two communities."

"Yeah, I shall apologize first, to you spectators. To willingly accept the fight without knowing the details about the enemy, it couldn't be helped..... And I also hope that you understand that this does not end with just beating down the Demon Lord. Hiding the truth now is just a temporary measure, it also serves to protect Little Garden's peace. I swear towards the two goddesses of [Thousand Eyes] that I'll punish the criminal severely if I catch him one day."

"[Salamandra] Also------Jin, good luck, I'll be waiting."

"I.....I understand."

Jin nervously nodded his head. Shiroyasha removed her serious expression and let out a hearty laugh.

"You don't need to be that nervous! Leave the Demon Lord to the strongest Floor Master, Shiroyasha-sama to handle! You'll only need to set the stage and leave your worries behind!"

Shiroyasha opened the fan with the two goddesses, laughing loudly.

Although Jin understood the situation, Izayoi squinted his eyes and a look of discontent was present in his eyes.

Noticing the reaction, Shiroyasha covered her mouth with the fan and let out a bitter laugh.

"Is hitting the head only making you unhappy? Boy."

"No? After all this is a good chance to see how strong the so-called Demon Lords are. I'll be glad if you let me be the welcoming committee----But what if [Where and who defeated the Demon Lord] appeared, it isn't going to be a problem with you right?"

Facing Izayoi with the provocative smile, Shiroyasha could only hopelessly smile and replied:

"Okay, If there was a chance, I'll allow you to give the Demon Lord a head start."

And with that, the negotiation was set up.

After that, they stayed in the audience room and formulated the plan to deal with the [Demon Lord] once it appears.

Alleging Izayoi's attitude as being overconfident, Mandra tried to remove the [No Name] out of the game, but was abruptly stopped by Shiroyasha and Sandra. He could only unhappily accept the help from Izayoi and company.

Part 3

During the period where Izayoi and the rest were being told the secrets, Leticia was searching everywhere for Asuka.

'Asuka.....Where exactly are you....'

Dusk had passed, and the time for darkness arrived.

The huge chandeliers and candles lit up the city, bursting out different kinds of radiant light, just like that a lively boom appeared. The demons that appeared at night were more high.

No matter how much brilliant light is shined, the situation wouldn't change.

Leticia showed an anxious expression as she flew in the air above the city.

'Damn, this is all because of my negligence! Even if it's Asuka, it's too dangerous to be alone in the northern side at this time of the day!'

There would always be lots of Rakshasa demons active at night in the Northern district.

Although not all ghosts and demons near the boundary wall are man-eaters, kidnapping and then selling the bodies was frequent. Not to mention, a member of [No Name] can't exactly prove their identity to the kidnappers, therefore they had to be vigilant towards kidnappings. Leticia was flying over places that Asuka had previously visited.

'Asuka could have headed to some other place.....Oh yeah, where was the place where they displayed interesting exhibits?'

Leticia had an idea, based on this idea, she headed off to the foot of the boundary wall that had lots of exhibits displayed.

Reaching the cave that connected to the boundary wall, Leticia quietly kept away her wings.

"Maybe she is here ----!"

"----

Wa....WAHAAA

There was something unusual happening in the cave. When the chandeliers started shaking possibly due to the dissonant melody, Leticia spread her wings and flew into the cave.

Soon after, she heard Asuka's voice.

"-----.....Inside! Definitely do not fall out!!"

"Asuka? What happ----?"

Leticia's words were cut off as she gasped.

In the exhibition hall, she saw residents trying to escape from the hole, as well as--Asuka, who was bravely running away from a group of several thousand evil animals, while courageously fighting and protecting the pointy hat faerie.

Chapter 4

Part 1

—Boundary wall, stage area, foot of a hill. Art exhibition venue.

Let the time return back to dusk.

After Asuka had abandoned Kuro Usagi and Izayoi, she'd won the intense chasing competition with the faerie wearing the pointy hat. She then arrived at the base of the Boundary Wall. Having run in the opposite direction where Izayoi was passing through the red-windowed corridors, the huge chandelier hung at the foothills area was casting a huge shadow illuminated by the red lights.

Placing the exhausted faerie on her shoulders, she then started strolling down the huge street located at the foot of the Boundary Wall.

"It's not like I'm going to eat you, I just wanted to have a travelling companion."

".....Aguuh~"

The faerie laying on Asuka's shoulders started spreading out it's body to form a star before letting out a tired cry.

Asuka gave some of the biscuits that she had bought from a nearby store to the pointy-hatted faerie.

"Here, for you. To prove the worth of our friendship."

"_____!"

The pointy-hatted faerie immediately sat up, having been lured by the sweet smell.

The freshly-baked biscuits that exuded a dense fragrant smell filled with almond and grilled caramel were simply too appetizing for the faerie, having played the catching game until she became weary.

Finishing the biscuit that was nearly it's full height, the faerie let out a cute "Fuahhh♪", before climbing on to Asuka's head.

—— Asuka was silently thinking: "Looks like the usage of food to bribe her was a success!"

"Since we are friends, we should introduce ourselves. I'm called Kudou Asuka, can you say it?"

".....Asukaaa?"

"You stretched that out a tad too long, it sounds too spiritless. You should say it a bit more clearly."

".....Asukaaa?"

"Just a bit more, you can do it . The ending must sound simple."

The pointy-hatted faerie with a tone of a child tilted it's head from left to right a few times, before shouting out Asuka's name with determination.

"....Asuka?"

"Yes, it's exactly that, not too suspicious and must be spirited."

"....Asuka!"

"Hehe, Thanks. Then, could you tell me your name?"

The pointy-hatted faerie stood up from Asuka's head, then it spiritedly said.

"Rattenfänger ~!"

".....? Ratten.....?"

Asuka showed a surprised expression. She didn't know the meaning behind that name, but the fact that the cute faerie had this kind of name gave a solemn feeling.

She brought the pointy-hatted faerie down from her head, cupping it with her palms.

"Is that your name?"

"No~ Commu!"

"Commu.....A community's name? Then what is your name?"

"?"

The faerie tilted it's head like she did not understand the question.

Asuka suddenly remembered what Leticia had addressed the faerie as before....a [Flock faerie].

Then does she belongs to that race of faeries?

(It can't be that she does not have a name right ....?)

Since it had come down to that, it might be better to address her as [Rattenfänger], as it was supposedly her reply. However, Asuka still could not change the solemn feeling that the name was giving out. She continuously tapped on her cheeks with the finger as if thinking about something, then she suggested to the faerie.

"Since I've gotten the change, is it fine if I gave you a name?"

"?....No~ No! Rattenfänger~!"

"Yup, besides the name Rattenfänger ..."

"No~ No! [A'Court]!"

The pointed-hatted faerie that was on Asuka's palm was shaking her head in denial.

"Rattenfänger~! [A'Court]!"

" ..... Acourt? Is that your name?"

"No~ No~ Rattenfänger~!"

Asuka sighed, it was clearly hopeless trying to let the faerie grasp the main point. She gave up on trying to chase after her name for now, proceeding to look at the exhibits located in the cave.

The huge chandelier that was here was without a doubt the symbol for the town. Besides the candlesticks and lanterns displayed in the exhibit hall, there were also many painted glass varying in size.

In the exhibit venue located inside the Boundary Wall, Asuka was looking back and forth at the exhibits, murmuring admirably.

"The amount of exhibits here is quite shocking.....So there were that many communities that came here and showcased their talents."

The showcased products had signboards in front of them that showed the name and flag of the community that had created it. There was something that had caught Asuka's attention, it was a silver candlestick that had it's top engraved with a flag.

"Hehe, the work on this silver candlestick seems pretty sophisticated."

"Pretty~!"

The pointy-hatted faerie that had returned back to Asuka's shoulder exclaimed in a cute voice. Considering the fact that when Asuka met the faerie, she was looking at the vases with the flower carving, so she really did like pretty things.

Asuka picked up the candlestick to verify it's creator.

"Creator: [Will-O'-Wisp]? It's the community that created the walking candlesticks eh."

With such a sophisticated carving technique used for the pattern, it must probably be according to the flag's tone pattern.

(This candlestick has a pattern of a burning flame carved on it, is it trying to let the flame itself have some special powers?)

Asuka and the pointy-hatted faerie felt that it was like the warmth of a campfire, deeply attracting them into it.

(Whether or not it has a community flag, it would still be presented differently eh....)

Carrying brooding eyes, Asuka sighed. This was certainly true, if [No Name] participated in this art festival, it would face an overwhelming disadvantage than the others.

A community without a name nor a flag.

Once they had support that self-essential factor is only restricted in only the individual's name and art, the first impressions given to people would certainly be different.

(If I want to become an outstanding [Host], the flag is definitely needed.....No matter what, we must snatch back our flag from the [Demon Lord].)

Asuka slowly made a fist with her hands, having gained the determination to fight.

The two of them looked at the large amount of exhibits. The exhibition hall was dug out from the interior of the Boundary Wall to look like a cave, therefore no light could shine into it.

This might have been a plan to bring out the radiance of the exhibits. The huge amounts of candlesticks and lanterns that exuded the warmth of fire, the painted glass that shone beautifully by a light source, flickering out a beautiful and brilliant luster of light, much more appreciating than works outside of here.

After that, they continued walking into the exhibition venue, seemingly arriving at a huge empty place that seemed to be the center of the exhibition.

Although they came to such a huge place, Asuka could not notice the crowd or the surroundings, as she was fixating her eyes on an object placed in the center of the place.

"That is....!"

Because of the huge exhibit in front of her eyes, everything else seemed to disappear, as though an illusion. Compared to the other exhibits before, the object before her was something much stronger and more shocking.

" Red-colored .....Red-colored iron giant?"

"Biggggg!"

That's right, the object that was displayed in the center was a giant man made of red-colored iron, looking both magnificent and monstrous, Asuka and the faerie lifted their heads to look at the huge body, becoming speechless because of the view.

The matching red and gold colored decorations on it's monstrous body that was about 30 feet high. The depiction on it's armor used light as a fundamental idea for the abstract painting, making it look like it possessed an overwhelming courage.

To add on, those huge arms that were twice the size of a human body.

Looking at that mono-spaced head and body, it couldn't help but make people wonder how could they have moved it here through such a small entrance.

It also could be felt that the creator built it with extreme enthusiasm due to the delicate decorations on it's red armor.

"How.....How wonderful, which community made this...?"

"Asuka! Rattenfänger!"

The pointy-hatted faerie jumped down from Asuka's shoulder with sparkling eyes.

The nameplate of the exhibit was written with: "Creator: Rattenfänger, Title: Deen."

Feeling extremely surprised, Asuka started asking:

"This thing was made by your community?"

"Hehe!" The pointy-hatted faerie puffed out her chest. Looks like it was the truth.

Asuka lifted her head up again to gaze at the iron doll with the name [Deen]. If the said monstrous sized iron doll was really made by these things called [Flock faeries], they must have spent an alarming amount of labor just to get it done.

"Is that so..... The community [Rattenfänger] must be very powerful."

The pointy-hatted faerie was shyly smiling, she must be very happy.

"After a closer observation, the other items displayed here in this place are all the main exhibits. After some comparison, I think that your community might be the one to win this gift game."

The pointy-hatted faerie was vivaciously bouncing while continuing to hum out: "Rattenfänger!"

A bit dumbfounded, Asuka picked the faerie up and placed her on her shoulders, intending to look at the other exhibits.

——It was at this time when a change happened.

".....Yaaaah.....!"

Whoosh~~ A gust of wind blew through the cave.

The gust of wind extinguished the flames illuminating the cave, Asuka couldn't help it but let out a soft yet sharp scream.

The other patrons also started exclaiming as the confusion spread out like a ripple of a wave.

"What happened ! Why was the flame extinguished?!"

"Be careful ! It might be the Rakshaha demons!"

"Quickly light up some of the nearby lanterns!"

The cave that had lost the light was plunged into darkness, only the people's strange screams echoed back and forth.

On reflex, Asuka grabbed the candlestick besides her body and lit the candle up with matches that were prepared.

It was at this time when a strange spot appeared deep in the cave.

"Found it.....I've finally found it ....!"

A strange tone mixed with deep resentment and strong dedication echoed throughout the cave. Although Asuka was aware of the dangers, she searched all four directions, trying to find the hidden person that produced the sound.

The echoed voice made it hard to narrow down the right place. As a last resort, Asuka gave a powerful shout.

"You despicable thing! Stop hiding and come out!"

The powerful shout echoed deep into the cave but the culprit did not give a reply.

Instead, the sound of a flute being played echoed through the cave, stimulating the senses and shocking the place with a weird tone.

"——Haha, found it.....The daring impostor that dares to use the name [Rattenfänger]!!!"

After the loud roar that shook the whole cave, came a moment of silence. Just when everyone was looking at each other——Thousands of red-eyed objects started climbing out of the cave's gaps, forming groups and attacking the crowd.

Immediately someone let out a frantic cry.

"This.....are ra.....are rats! They are all rats!"

The things that filled up the cave and were creating a disturbance were indeed rats.

The rats that covered the floor started forming waves and were advancing. This scenario sent chills down Asuka's spine.

"Al.....Although I did call you to come out, this is far too many already!"

"Ah~!" The pointy-hatted faerie gave a horrible shriek.

Asuka turned her back away from the waves of rats, swiftly sprinting away with the faerie hanging on. The others also did the same, running away in the narrow cave, just like a panic attack.

If this continued there would be a serious tragedy. Realizing this point, Asuka turned her back and faced the rat army.

"This.....This is enough! Stop this and go back to your nest!"

Asuka shouted. But the rats continued advancing, showing no intention to stop at all.

Unable to manipulate the rats, Asuka started feeling anxious. At this time a group of rats jumped towards her, making her take her gift card out on reflex, summoning the silver cross sword that was used during the [Fores Garo] fight.

"Damn.....Damn it.....!"

She raised the sword to her eye level, then slashing laterally with it.

Although the silver sword had the power to break the evil force, it did not have any effect when facing ordinary rats. Asuka could only hack some of them at best, and

it was nearly impossible to calculate how many thousands of them were left. The rats that ran along the ceiling were already in front of her.

Asuka decided to ignore the rats and continue moving forward, but it was much trickier to avoid thousands of small animals forming groups than a large beast.

They were a devilish group that could probably finish eating a whole forest within a night.

The rats kept jumping down from the ceiling to attack the shivering pointy-hatted faerie that was on Asuka's shoulders.

"Ah!"

"Danger!"

Asuka was forced to jump towards the back. Since she couldn't order the rats, she could only retreat. And due to the confusion, the people that were at the entrance were in a state of wanting to leave but couldn't leave, shrieking and forcefully pushing one another, scrambling to escape.

"Get out fast!" "Arghhh!" "What is happening here!" "Let.....let me out first! Stop blocking the road!" "Stop pushing! Get out fast!" "No use! They already caught up, we can't...."

"Everyone listen to me and run together!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

The vexed Asuka started shouting loudly. The chaos instantly died down, everyone was neatly saluting to Asuka.

After that everyone started to run towards the cave's exit in an orderly manner, showing quite a fantastical scene.

Asuka, who was escaping from the grand march of the rats by following the rear-most of the group, started feeling suspicious towards the enemy's true colors.

(The gift to manipulate hadn't disappeared yet....! So what is going on.....?)

The rats were still focusing their chase on Asuka.

Even if she had the power of manipulation, she was still an ordinary human, so she was slower in terms of speed compared to beasts. Not long after, the rats began to attack Asuka, having reached their target range.

Undaunted by the blade that was swung by Asuka, the rats continued to attack her.

Their method of attacking seemed to let Asuka realize something.

(It can't be.....Their target is this child...?)

Asuka looked at the immature faerie that was tightly grasping on to her shoulder.

The pointy-hatted faerie was tightly grabbing onto Asuka, showing a face as if she was going to cry. To the faerie that was nearly the size of a human palm, the rats were definitely huge monsters in her eyes.

".....Guuuuu~!"

Since the target was the immature faerie, Asuka would be able to escape from the situation once she threw the faerie off her shoulders.

However, Asuka's pride did not allow her to abandon a trembling young figure that was scared.

Asuka dismissed the fragile thoughts in her mind, daringly pulled her chest clothing and squeezed the faerie inside.

"Wuahh?"

"Hide inside! Don't fall off!"

Asuka, having decided what she must do, used her full power to sprint ahead on the rat-infested floor.

The current motive was to get to the exit. Although the red dress protected Asuka from being harmed by the rats, the parts of the body that weren't covered suffered a different fate.

Getting bitten by the rats' sharp teeth, Asuka's hands and legs started bleeding.

Even so, the option to [Abandon the young faerie] still did not appear in Asuka's heart.

(The exit is not too far away from here....!)

The one who kept on running was Asuka and the one who wouldn't give up on the chase was the devilish group.

However, at the next moment, countless blades of shadow appeared, with a silhouette of a person nearby.

"——How dare you, mere rats, bare your fangs at my compatriots!"

The high-speed razor blades of shadow, like a tornado, started making a stirrer-like action inside the narrow cave, mincing and absorbing the rats in just a matter of seconds.

Not even having a chance to blink, the action was already completed, exterminating the enemy without breaking any of the exhibits.

Asuka held down her hair that was blown by the wind, with a surprised action, she exclaimed.

"Th.....The shadow.....In such a short time just finished all those rats....?"

Asuka turned her head to look, and was surprised again.

According to the voice earlier, Asuka determined that it was Leticia who came to her rescue. But Leticia's appearance was totally different, leaving Asuka stunned.

Leticia's appearance did not match the usual look of the young maid.

The cute young girl transformed into a lady that exudes out a flirtatious temperament, the ribbon on the beautiful blonde hair was taken off, flashing out a dazzling brilliance.

The maid uniform changed into a dark red leather jacket, with an intriguing skirt that seemed to have restraints on it. People who looked at the dramatic transfiguration couldn't think that it was the usually gentle Leticia.

Because of anger, Leticia's beautiful face was distorted, she let out a ferocious roar, revealing her vampiric fangs.

"Where is the manipulator! Come out now! You dare to attack in a public place, you should be prepared for the consequences! I shall bare my fangs and claws and let you taste the power of my community's flag! Come out and give me your name and community!"

Leticia's indignant roar echoed in the cave, but there wasn't any response from the opposition. The originally ginormous group of scary rats started pulling back in retreat.

The cave was filled with utter silence, it appears that the perpetrator had also escaped.

Looking from the side, Asuka breathed out in relief, although she didn't know what to say, it was still better to ask the transfigured Leticia:

"Are.....Are you Leticia?"

"Yup. Okay, Asuka, what exactly happened? Although the number is larger, for the rats to gain the upper hand, it's not like the usual you, right?"

The tone of Leticia was the same as before. Although she changed into an adult, her expression was still as gentle as always, but Asuka who was hit hard by her true strength murmured.

"......So you were this impressive."

"Ah?"

Leticia tilted her head. After she had understood Asuka's praise, she replied with an unhappy tone;

"Th.....That, master. I'm happy for you to praise me, but it's a little bit rude to me. Although I look like that, I was once a [Demon Lord], a pureblood vampire! The proud [Knight of Little Garden]! Even though I've lost my divinity, I can defeat millions of those things without breaking a sweat!"

Leticia pouted her lips unhappily. Without a doubt, this reaction was exactly the same as when she was cute, but the look in Asuka's eyes was a different matter. Probably having deprecating thoughts about herself.

Asuka lowered her head, letting out a complicated tone of voice.

"But, I..."

"Asuka!"

Suddenly, the pointy-hatted faerie probed out of Asuka's chest.

Although her face was full of tears, she still happily called out her name and hugged her neck.

"Asuka! Asuka....!"

"Wait.....Wait a moment ....."

The faerie tightly hugged Asuka, letting out a voice that sounded like she wanted to cry or laugh, maybe it was their method of expressing gratitude. Leticia innocently looked at the current scene unfolding.

"Aiyaya, she is completely stuck to you. We should take her back with us, it's dangerous now that the sun has set."

"That's .....right."

A bit hesitant, but Asuka still nodded in agreement, as it was still not guaranteed that there wouldn't be any more attacks. Both of them and the faerie started walking down the streets illuminated by the red-colored lights, heading back to the [Thousand Eyes] branch shop.

Part 2

—Boundary wall, Observatory, [Thousand Eyes] branch shop.

"To the showers! NOW!"

Wearing the Japanese-style apron, the assistant shop keeper who had been waiting started baring her teeth and shouting as soon as she saw Asuka.

"There is no way on earth I'm allowing you to enter the shop looking like that! The clothes are placed here! You better wash yourself cleanly! You must be thankful, it can help you replenish your weariness! — Ah? What? Wounds? It can be healed just by bathing! So please wash your body cleanly or else you will dirty the shop's interior!"

—.....Just like this, Asuka who was forcefully half-undressed was brought to the bathroom.

Holding onto a clean towel that was given to her, Asuka went into the open-air bathroom that could see the sky, clearly speechless.

".....That's right, my body is indeed dirty."

Stained with mud and rat's blood, it was very unkempt of Asuka.

This type of treatment however still kind of hurt Asuka's heart as she was still a maiden.

Asuka sighed, the wounds on her body started to heal up as she repeatedly rinsed the water on herself. This dramatic effect allowed Asuka to admire the bath in the bathhouse.

"This is wonderful, it can't even be compared to the treated water from the water tree. Worthy of being called a [Thousand Eyes] bath."

Sighing again, Asuka dipped her shoulders into the huge bath, letting her body rest.

.....Today, Asuka experienced fun she never had for a long time, making her happy for the whole day.

Not caring about anyone, able to stroll around freely and admire the strange culture of this place.

Out of the many days, only today had made Asuka experience something that was similar to the dream life she always had.

Lovely reticent friends, always being noisy; interesting friends that made fun of each other, foes that throw sarcastic comments at each other.

Although the elected leader was still immature and young, he was an upright and honest boy.

Towards Asuka who was a problematic child that was isolated in her home, Little Garden was truly a wonderful retreat from her world.

(.....But, this relationship was formed because I had a gift.)

Asuka looked at the night sky with a tinge of loneliness. In the first place the biggest reason she was summoned here was—

The hope that Kuro Usagi and the others carry---[To save the community], that's why they needed them. It wouldn't be strange if their relationship was severed if the gift she possessed wasn't even usable.

Opponents who weren't affected by the gift were a great threat in subverting Asuka's worth in staying here.

(Those rats just now.....Why didn't my gift work on them?)

Asuka thought back to the time before the surprise attack. Her powers had not been effective for two times before.

The first time was when she faced against [Perseus] leader, Laius Perseus.

The second time was when she used it in [No Name] workshop on the slumbering sword, holy gun, magical bow and etc gifts.

Needless to say, Asuka's gift wasn't effective against anyone who was stronger than her.

(Although I've not fully understood the concept behind [spirit power(?)], but I should not be losing to rats.)

Asuka gazed at the night sky, recalling what Kuro Usagi once said.

—[spirit power(?)], which was the [Gift] that was received from the world, also known as [Life ranking].

Why would an ordinary person like Asuka have received such a high-class spirit power(?).

When they arrived into the Little Garden, Kuro Usagi once deduced this:

"In order to receive the spirit power(?), there are about two methods:

First, [Based on the impact of the world, you get to receive it through influence, contribution, compensation and reward].

Second, [A miracle had happened during birth].

There are other reasons, but the most of them fit into both categories. To give the former reason an example, those that are closely related with birth are mainly types of well-known demons and extraordinary individuals. By using a life sacrifice or sacrificial offering method to gain immortality, these kind of spirit power(?) users would eventually become Rakshaha demons. Yeah, but humans are almost always because of the second reason."

"Then, so it was because when I was born a miracle happened....?"

"YES! Like [Perseus] who we once fought, he was the son of Zeus in Greek mythology. Technically it was impossible to breed between a human and a god, but it was possible to distort this unreasonable rule to achieve reproduction. They would be living higher than an ordinary life——These hybrids, they are addressed as divine beings until the fifth generation.....Well, Perseus also gained merit for defeating Medusa, though.

People had speculated that the spirit power(?) Asuka-san received during birth is mostly a special circumstance, or your ancestors are most likely the Shura deities and the like extraordinary individuals."

"Really.....What kind of special circumstances happened during my birth...."

"Aiyaya, no need to think about it that complicatedly! Basically as long as you have the understanding level of knowing that [Heritage] is equal to [Merit], then there is no problem."

Kuro Usagi concluded with another example, a [Moon rabbit] with the devotion to jump into the fire in this case.

——As an extra, a bit of digression. The rank of those that are part of the family or are given weapons by the gods or Buddhas seems to be called [Divinity]. It seems to raise their power to the highest level of their class race, but Asuka did not pry for details.

Kuro Usagi guaranteed that if Asuka had the power to even force [Fores Garo] Galdo Gasper to listen and kneel down, she definitely possessed a high-level spirit power(?).

(Then.....There is only a reason to that.)

Just by thinking of unacceptable facts, Asuka bit down on her teeth. Because the most reasonable answer as to why the orders were ineffective against the rats——Was that they were probably [Influenced by someone stronger than Asuka].

(.....Guuu!)

"Plop!" Asuka sank her body underwater.

Asuka had already realized that out of the three, her powers were the most useless. The two of them could be described as having [Hidden Unknown potential], but the development of her gift was——[A gift to dominate other gifts] with such a position, if the opposition had a stronger gift, then exerting out 100% of it's strength was totally impossible.

Having said that, Asuka was unable to manipulate the high-level slumbering gifts in the [No Name] workshop. After inquiring, she then knew that the items inside were all divinity-class, which was still far away from getting manipulated by her gift.

It's wrong, getting to the bottom line, [Weapons] are simply meaningless.

Asuka could only think of martial arts accomplishments on the level of a normal human.

Even if she could extract a weapon's power, she was still unable to fight on par with Izayoi or Kasukabe.

(.....Was my decision incorrect?)

Gurgle*Gurgle*, Asuka aspirated air out while hugging her knees.

It's still possible to amend now. This strength is currently strongly biased towards [Manipulation of people's heart], if it continues to enhance, eventually it would turn into a devilish gift capable of making all kinds of races surrender.

If that happened, Asuka would have to shine as a witch capable of manipulation.

"......I don't really wish for that kind of ending."

The tender sound, together with the steam from the bathroom, raised up and dissipated.

Aside from self-respect——Asuka's sense of justice was also particularly strong.

What was the value of using it if the opposition couldn't even resist but say "Yes"? It was because Asuka had strong self-esteem that she grew up without having to distort her heart.

(The enemy will continue attacking as long as the immature faerie is here. When that time comes I will have to emerge victorious....!)

Asuka lay down her hair originally on her head, getting up from the spring. This was when the changing room started getting noisy.

"Asuka-san! Your wounds aren't serious right!"

Kuro Usagi, who had a towel wrapped around her body after undressing, rushed into the bathroom with her ears on end.

"Wait wait wait wait! Kuro Usagi! What is the meaning of stepping into the bath before the master OHOHOHOHOH!!"

"Wayayayayaya!"

Plop! Crash!

The equally naked Shiroyasha forcefully embraced herself on Kuro Usagi, making both of them fall and tumble into the bath after rolling for three and a half rounds. Especially Kuro Usagi, who looked like she went down head first.

Asuka hurriedly rushed to Kuro Usagi after hearing her fatal cries.

"Wait.....Wait a moment! Kuro Usagi! Are you all right! You hit your head on the ground!"

"Am (I'm) .....Am ogey (I'm okay)! Achuka-an, aw u ogey (Asuka-san, are you okay)?!"

Kuro Usagi was still worried about Asuka even when her head was inserted into the bottom of the bath and constantly spitting out bubbles.

Shiroyasha elatedly grabbed Kuro Usagi's rabbit ears, forcefully pulling them.

"Hei!"

"YAHAAAA!"

Kuro Usagi was also yanked out of the bath.

Looking like she was about to cry, Kuro Usagi grabbed onto Asuka's shoulders and making a thorough inspection.

"How.....How is the wound? Are.....Are there any infections? Are there any scars on your maiden skin? Are you barely tolerating it? Are you really fine?"

"It's.....It's fine, it healed after bathing here."

Kuro Usagi kept touching Asuka's body discourteously, knowing that Kuro Usagi was doing this out of good will, Asuka didn't push her away.

When Asuka was thinking when was the good time to stop, Shiroyasha was intently observing every part of Asuka's body.

".....Yup, Asuka's body development is not like a 15 year old girl."

"Huh?"

"You're quite developed from your collarbone down to your breasts but your curves towards your belly button are quite tight and normalized yet your skin has a soft

womanly feel to it. Not to mention if one were to take a handful of that wonderful meat that lies between your thighs and buttocks you'd see that young skin overflow between your fingers and....."

BLAM!!

Two wooden barrels struck home on Shiroyasha's face.

The sexual harassment speech lasted for about one second from the start to the end.

Asuka stared at Shiroyasha with a cold gaze, while unintentionally blushing.

".....Eh? What? Shiroyasha was this kind of person?"

"Unfortunately, yes.....Shiroyasha-sama is very impressive, but her character is very unimpressive."

And just like that, Kuro Usagi coldly assented.

Asuka was planning to leave the bathroom, but more people started coming in from the changing room. The people who entered were Kasukabe Yō, Leticia as well as the pointy-hatted faerie.

"Asuka!"

"Tap, Tap, Tap". The faerie came running and climbed up Asuka's body.

Ignoring the itchy sensation on her back, Asuka turned her head to face Kasukabe and the others.

"What happened? Did everyone come to bathe together?"

"Yeah."

"It's fine once in a while. Some more it's hard for everyone to gather, so we should chat about what happened today or schedules for tomorrow.....Are you heading out, Asuka?"

Oh, so that's what it was. Asuka shook her head, returning back to the bath.

Part 3

Izayoi, Jin and the female shop assistant were inside the prepared guestroom chatting.

Nibbling on seaweed pancakes, both of them wanted to know, "How did the shop move to the North?"

Although reluctant, the shop assistant, who was instructed to accompany and chat with the guests, frowned while replying:

"You are referring to this shop right? Actually the shop itself doesn't move. If I say it is related to the system of the "Astral Gate", would you understand"

"No, don't understand it at all."

Izayoi replied without a hint of hesitation. Sighing, the female shop assistant put on a lighthearted tone and started explaining:

"In short, all the various entrances lead to the same internal space. Such as a beehive.....Just think about the honeycomb inside a hive, should be more understandable right?"

The reason why [Thousand Eyes] had such a vast interior space compared to how it looks, was probably due to this principle.

In the first place the shop doesn't exist in any original location. Izayoi showed great interest in this, motioning the shop assistant to go on.

"Oh? In other words it's technically both the main and branch shops, is that right?"

"That's not right nor wrong. There was a language problem with the words I spoke before, it's about the dissimilarity with the Astral Gate. The Astral gate can connect to all the outer gates, in contrast, inside the entrance [Thousand Eyes] there exist a honeycomb shaped store for each level."

"Oh? In other words [7-digit honeycomb shaped branch shop],[6-digit honeycomb shaped branch shop] and so forth?"

"Yes. Of course, there is only one entrance that leads to the main shop."

Izayoi understood and nodded his head. The shop assistant opened her mouth and continued speaking:

"This old branch store located on the platform was closed down due to it's poor site. Because Shiroyasha was invited to participate in the co-hosted festival, she had to link this shop with the others, cutting the personal area and the empty space in the shop into different sections. Therefore the front door leading into the shop couldn't be opened, so I'm sorry for the inconvenience."

"Understood."

"Aiya? What are you chatting about in this place?"

After chatting for quite some time, Asuka and the others emerged from the bathroom.

Asuka was wearing the prepared thin bathrobe, any skin above her neck being pink in color was due to bathing in the hot water.

Tilting back his chair, Izayoi looked at the female group that just had a bath.

"....Oh? This view is not too bad. Don't you think so, O-chibi-sama?"

"Eh?"

"Contrasting with the abundant development from their arms down to their breasts, that can be discerned through the thin clothing of Kuro Usagi and Ojou-sama, the water dripping down from the slender but healthy Kasukabe and Leticia's hair onto their collarbone lines that spontaneously guides the sight to their modest bust is definitely....."

BLAM!!

This was the second attack relying on reflex.

Of course, the one who shot it were Asuka and Kuro Usagi, who were both flustered.

"Are there only perverts in this community!"

"Shiroyasha-sama and Izayoi-sama are both dummies!"

"Okay.....It's okay already, please calm down."

Leticia hurriedly tried to dissuade them, Kasukabe was not caring about anything, while Shiroyasha was laughing so loud she had to hug her stomach.

Looking at Jin who was always trying to cure his constant headaches, the female shop assistant sympathetically placed her hand on Jin's shoulder.

"........You've been working hard."

".......Yeah."

One side, the main organization, was filled with problematic children.

On the other side, the organization leader was also another vexing problematic child.

Both of them shared the empty sadness.

On the other side, Shiroyasha and Izayoi were tightly holding hands together as if they found their soul mates.

Part 4

After that, Leticia and the female shop assistant left the guest room. The remaining ones were Izayoi, Asuka, Kasukabe, Kuro Usagi, Jin, Shiroyasha as well as the pointy-hatted faerie.

Shiroyasha occupied the center of the guest room, placing her elbows on the table, she announced in a serious voice:

"Then everyone, we shall now discuss on how to make Kuro Usagi's referee attire more sexier and cuter...."

"No, we won't."

"Let's start."

"No, we won't!"

The mischievous Izayoi seconded Shiroyasha's proposal, with Kuro Usagi rejecting it instantly.

Asuka, who couldn't stand the conservation between those three, suddenly thought of her red dress.

"Oh yeah, the attire Kuro Usagi is wearing was put together by Shiroyasha, right? Then what about this red dress that I'm wearing?"

"Oh! So it was the clothes that I've sent to her right?! Kuro Usagi said she liked that dress, but regrettably it didn't suit her. Especially due to those valuable beautiful legs....."

"That dress was rejected due to Shiroyasha's abnormal ideas. Kuro Usagi thought that the dress was quite cute.....So Kuro Usagi thought it was a waste to just leave it in the closet. Luckily Asuka-sama is suited to wear red."

"Hehe, thanks. The attire Kuro Usagi is wearing also suits you."

After Asuka thanked her, Kuro Usagi let out a "Wuuu" sound, showing a complex expression.

Showing a crafty smile, Shiroyasha started the main topic:

"Okay, we should put the matter regarding the attire aside for now. Actually, I want Kuro Usagi to be the referee for tomorrow's match."

"Aiyaya? That is kind of abrupt, may I inquire what's the reason?"

"Yup. Because of the commotion you guys made, the knowledge about a [Moon Rabbit] being here has been made public, so the crowd has been looking forward to seeing the moon rabbit in tomorrow's gift game. Since the news of a [Highborn of Little Garden] has already been spread, of course we would let you go on stage. So I hope that you would officially ref the game tomorrow, of course I would prepare remuneration for you."

So that's why~ Everyone understood the situation.

"Kuro Usagi understands. Then the job of the referee for tomorrow's game should be handled by me, Kuro Usagi."

"Yeah, Thanks.....Then, regarding the referee attire, you will wear the translucent black sexy vest shirt that is woven with lace....."

"No, I won't."

"Yes, you will."

"Completely rejected! Ah~ Really! Please have some sense of proportion, Izayoi-san!"

Seeing Izayoi being so disruptive, Kuro Usagi, with her rabbit ears on end, lost her temper.

At another side, Kasukabe who was minding her business, suddenly came back and asked Shiroyasha:

"Shiroyasha, who am I facing for tomorrow?"

"Sorry, this I can't tell you. It's not fair for the [Host] to reveal it, right? The only thing I can tell you now is the communities' names."

"Pa!" Shiroyasha snapped her fingers.

The parchment that appeared in today's match made it's appearance again, with the same article emerging out.

Looking at the community's names that were written on it, Asuka widened her eyes in shock.

" [Will-O'-Wisp] and [Rattenfänger]?!"

"Yeah. Although uncommon, but both communities are from 6-digit outer gate, which is the next floor. I can't say much, but I recommend you'd better be mentally prepared for this."

Hearing Shiroyasha's serious advice, Kasukabe nodded her head.

Izayoi, on the other hand, stared at the parchment and started laughing uneasily.

"Oh....[Rattenfänger]? The [Rat-catching clown] community? Then tomorrow's enemy would be, the Pied Piper of Hamelin?"

Eh? Asuka replied with a shock.

But her sound was being drowned by Kuro Usagi and Shiroyasha's lamented sound.

"The... The [Piper of Hamelin]!?"

"Wait, what are you saying, kid? Explain yourself in detail."

Facing both people's surprised expression, Izayoi couldn't help but repeatedly blink his eyes.

Shiroyasha, using a low tone of voice, started questioning more about the specific background:

"Oh, sorry. You probably didn't know this since you'd just arrived——[Piper of Hamelin], was the name of a community that served under a certain [Demon Lord].

"What?"

"The Demon Lord's community name was [Grimm Grimoire]. It was a summoner who was the Demon Lord, the community having previously summoned demons from over 200 grimoires."

"Multiple demons could be summoned from a grimoire. What needed the most attention was, everything was included in the grimoire, who had different world background. The grimoires was just like a playing disk, having clearly-defined rules and coercive strength, a truly terrifying and strong Demon Lord."

"Oh~~?"

Izayoi's eyes started flashing brightly. Kuro Usagi continued talking:

"When the Demon Lord lost a gift game to a certain community, he should've died.....But then Izayoi said that [Rattenfänger] was the [Piper of Hamelin]. Kuro Usagi is not well-versed towards children stories, so just in case, could you give an explanation?"

Kuro Usagi's nervous expression was probably on alert with regards to the appearance of the Demon Lord.

After thinking for a while, Izayoi let out a mischievous expression while stretching his hand out to grab onto Jin's head.

"I understand the situation. Sooooo, we will have our Chibi-sama explain everything."

"Eh? Ah, okay."

Everyone turned their sights towards Jin. Although Jin replied, he still felt nervous due to the question suddenly being placed upon himself. Izayoi pulled Jin's head towards himself, whispering to him:

"........The chance for you to present yourself has come, show some results."

"Yeeee.....Yes!"

Coughing once, Jin straightened his gown, before starting to slowly describe:

"[Rattenfänger] means [Rat catcher] in German. In regards to this rat catcher, it is the metaphor for the book written by the Grimm Brothers---- [Piper of Hamelin]."

Everyone nodded their heads, Jin continued speaking:

"Among the children tales written by the Grimm Brothers, there were a number of them written using history as a reference. [Piper of Hamelin] was one of them. With [Hamelin], it was the name of a city that became the setting."

There was an inscription that became the prototype for the Grimm Brother's tale [Piper of Hamelin]:

—Year 1284, John and Paul's day 26th of June.

A piper dressed in multicolored robes lured 130 Hamelin-born children and they all disappeared at the execution grounds near the hills—

The inscription was a narrative based on an actual event, displayed on a piece of stained-glass.

It later became one of the Grimm Brother's tales, with [Piper of Hamelin] as the title.

"Yeah, then why must the rat catcher be used as a metaphor?"

"Because the clown featured in the Grimm Brother's tales, was a rat-catching clown."

Jin smoothly answered Shiroyasha's question, while Asuka who was besides him silently breathed in air.

(He said.....[Rat-catching] clown .....?)

The incident during the attack flashed past in Asuka's thoughts. Thinking about it, when she was attacked, there was a dissonant flute sound being played.

"Yeah.....[Rattenfänger] and [Piper of Hamelin] eh.....In this way, the chance of the remnants of the Demon Lord sneaking into the Birth of the Fire Dragon festival may be quite high."

"YES. Since participant's can't make use of the [Host Master] privilege, that line is highly likely."

"Ah? What does that mean? That is the first time I've heard that."

"Oh oh, that's right. After hearing that the Demon Lord would appear, I arranged for some countermeasures. Which means using my [Host Master] privilege, there was an additional rule included in the festival. For more details, you can refer to this."

Shiroyasha snapped her hand and another parchment appeared, what was written on it was various matters regarding the festival

[§ Birth of the Fire Dragon Festival §]

- Various matters to note when attending the Festival.

1. All Gift Games between Communities on the stage area and the free area are forbidden.
2. Participants with [Host Master] privilege are forbidden to enter without permission of the festival's host.
3. The use of the participants'[Host Master] privilege is forbidden inside the festival area.
4. Trespassing into the festival's boundaries, both the stage area and the free area, is forbidden to people outside the participants.

Vow: Respecting the described content, the two communities that host this Gift game based on their glory and flag.

[Thousand Eyes] *Stamp*

[Salamandra] *Stamp*

Reading the contents of the parchment, Izayoi slightly nodded his head.

"[People apart from the participants are unable to enter the game], [Participants are unable to use the Host Master privilege] right? Indeed, according to this rule, the Demon Lord attacking here will be unable to use the [Host Master] privilege."

"Yeah, anyways, what can be controlled is already controlled."

Really? Izayoi agreeingly nodded his head.

While on another side, Kuro Usagi asked Jin with a surprised tone of voice:

"But it's quite shocking. Jin-bocchan, where did you acquire the information regarding the [Piper of Hamelin]?"

"That.....That is nothing special, it's just that when I brought Izayoi to the stack room, I also looked at the books..."

"Oh, really? But no matter what you say this information is quite useful. However it would be quite knotty if the enemy is the winner of the game, we should start monitoring before Sandra-sama loses face and has her pride hurt——When any accident happens then, it will be your turn to help."

Everyone from [No Name] started nodding, with the exception of Asuka who had an unsettling feeling in her head.

([Rattenfänger] is under a Demon Lord.....? Then this child is----?)

Asuka looked at the pointy-hatted faerie who was happily sleeping on her lap, she who claims that she came from [Rattenfänger].

However, Asuka didn't think that this faerie was any grotesque thing. Although she wanted to bring up this matter to everyone, but when it was her turn, nothing could come out from her mouth.

Still with an unsettling feeling in her heart, she returned to her own room, preparing to face a new day.

Chapter 5

Part 1

—Boundary wall, stage area. [Birth of the Fire Dragon festival] Operation Headquarters.

Amidst of all those deafening cheers, the company of [No Name] was seated in special seats. Seemingly because all the seats in the event area were occupied, Sandra had to make some arrangements, providing special seats for them at the palace balcony overlooking the stage area.

Izayoi was full of smiles while eagerly waiting for the start of the match.

"Speaking of which, Shiroyasha, is it really fine for Kuro Usagi to be the ref?"

"Yeah, I had already officially entrusted Kuro Usagi with the role of the game referee and also as a host."

"Is that so? But even if there wasn't any [Little Garden Aristocrat] to be the referee, the gift game would still proceed like normal right? So what's the significance of having Kuro Usagi be the referee?"

Izayoi turned his head and asked. Sitting at the center of the balcony was Sandra, who leaned forward and re-emphasized.

"When the judgement controller [Little Garden Aristocrat] refs a game, it enhances the [Guarantee] of the game. A record will be left then as a game with rules that did not violate the legitimacy, as judged by a [Little Garden Aristocrat]. If it can leave a record in the Little Garden central system, it indirectly guarantees that both communities are dueling with dignity. This is extremely important."

"Oh? So it means that you, Sandra.....Agh, Sandra-sama's festival has already been confirmed to have a [Guaranteed] game right?"

Izayoi originally wanted to address Sandra by name, but upon noticing Mandra's sharp gaze, he could only hunch his shoulders and correct his mistake. Asuka, who sat beside him, was feeling restless and looking uneasy.

"What's wrong. Ojou-sama, you keep looking uneasy."

"......It would be strange not to be worried after hearing those words yesterday, the enemy we are facing will be of a higher digit than us right?"

Yeah, as replied by Shiroyasha. She stretched out her hand, and the names of the opposition appeared in mid-air.

"[Will-O'-Wisp] and [Rattenfänger]— Both of them are 6-digit communities. Usually they wouldn't bother to attend games at the lower gates, but they probably wanted to obtain the gift from a Floor Master, so they took the liberty of participating in the game. Even if the possibility of the Demon Lord's attack were to be deducted, it wouldn't be easy to face them."

"Okay .....Then Shiroyasha, do you think Kasukabe has any chance of winning?"

"None."

Hearing Shiroyasha's not-so-hesitant reply, Asuka revealed a bitter expression.

Asuka was probably worried about Kasukabe. After all, she might even be attacked on the stage. She, who was sitting on the special seat on the palace balcony, kept feeling uneasy.

"Calm down a bit, Ojou-sama. Even if a Demon Lord attack were to occur, it's not against Kasukabe. The chances of her being attacked immediately after it appears aren't that high right?"

"That ain't wrong...."

"Relax. Since the game is controlled by the judgement controller, the rules will prohibit lives from being taken. Furthermore I have already warned Kasukabe, if she can't win she might as well surrender. This way there won't be any serious consequences."

"And also, have you forgotten about the participation rules?

—[Those that possess the [Host Master] privilege, must show their identification before becoming a participant.]

—[Participants are unable to use the [Host Master] privilege]

—[People aside from participants are unable to enter the festival area.]

It would be quite intriguing if the enemy could appear even with all those rules set.....But there is no sign of that happening now."

"That's right." Asuka replied, but her problems did not just stem from this.

With her sights wandering around, naturally it would land on the faerie.

If what was discussed last night was true, that meant that the pointy-hatted faerie was related to this. Asuka kept trying to keep away the thoughts about her bringing trouble to the community just by bringing someone back.

When Asuka felt the anxiety, the pointy-hatted faerie puzzledly tilted her head.

"Asuka~?"

".....It's nothing, don't be worried."

Although she abruptly denied it, her anxious expression clearly showed otherwise. The pointy-hatted faerie worriedly lifted her head to look at Asuka.

No matter what Asuka thought, the competition would still go on.

The sun had finally risen and Kuro Usagi went to the stage to announce the start of the game. She breathed in deeply, then smiled sweetly to the crowd that was surrounding her.

"Sorry for the wait, everyone! The [Duel of the Creators] match begins now! The referee for today will be [Thousand Eyes] exclusive, everyone's favorite Kuro Usagi, to serve everyone today♪"

After Kuro Usagi smiled towards everyone, the crowd erupted into cheers, even the stage was shaking.

"WOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH The moon rabbit really came AHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"Kuro Usagi!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I came here just to see you WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOH!"

"Today I will peep underneath your skirt AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

The crowd was displaying extraordinarily strong enthusiasm, today.

Although Kuro Usagi was still smiling, her rabbit ears were on end, clearly afraid.

She must've felt some kind of unspeakable danger.

".....Kuro Usagi sure is warmly welcomed."

In the midst of the fanatical cheers, there was an especially conspicuous signboard that was written with "L.O.V.E Kuro Usagi❤"

Asuka stared at the crowd with cold eyes as if they were kitchen waste.

(Is this counted as a culture out of Japan....It's quite difficult to accept what is happening...)

Truthfully, Kuro Usagi was indeed cute. This Asuka couldn't object to.

Hearing the roars from the crowd, Izayoi suddenly remembered something important.

"Oh yeah, Shiroyasha. What is the meaning of making Kuro Usagi's miniskirt so that you think you can see, yet you can't see? This kind of subtlety stuff has been outdated already! Didn't we discuss the exploration of the true art yesterday, in the end you only have this kind of extent?"

"You are discussing that topic? Are you both crazy?"

The comment made by Asuka didn't go through neither of their ears.

Shiroyasha removed the binoculars from her eyes, and looked at Izayoi unhappily. She was clearly showing a disappointed face towards her soul-mate.

"Heeh, so you are that kind of man with that extent, right? And you dare to say those words? It feels like you are no different than those men there. And I thought you would understand true art."

".....Oh? You really said it. In other words, there is a reason behind the art of hiding the contents of the skirt?"

Of course. Shiroyasha nodded. She kept her usual imposing manner and started explaining:

"Use your brain a bit. What is the source behind human's power? Is it ero? There is some sense in it. However, the power of imagination will sometimes exceed this factor! The expectations of the uncharted territory! From ignorance to clear desire! Kid! Don't think about experiencing the greatest art if you are like the rest of the men! From here onwards, you will come across the mysteries of the [Unknown]! Let me give an example! Such as the mysterious Mona Lisa that gives out a beautiful

mystique! The mystique that Venus of Milo gives out with her missing arms! The mystique of the sight underneath a girl's skirt! These mysterious things have an overwhelming desire to explore the heart, at the same time the bitterness of not taking a closer look! This bitterness will raise the sublimation in your heart! So the best art in this entire world is hidden——IN THE UNIVERSE IN YOUR HEART!!!"

HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEENNNNNNNNNNNGGGGGG!(Sound effect intended)

The extremely suitable sound effect intimidated Izayoi.

"What....Did you say.....The universe in our heart.....?"

Izayoi who was still not well-versed in the new realm was hit hard.

Someone else looking at Shiroyasha, explaining about the contents of the miniskirt in such fanaticism, was Sandra, who received an even greater shock.

"Shi.....Shiroyasha-sama.....? Did you eat anything wrong.....?"

"Sandra, don't look, you'll catch their stupidity."

Mandra gently covered Sandra, who was looking uneasy, with an attitude that did not care about anything else.

However his gaze was cold and sharp.

Shiroyasha didn't care at all. Any cold and sharp gaze meant for she, who was pursuing true art was neither painful nor itchy at all. Shiroyasha held her fist tightly, concluding her final words:

"That's right! True art lies in the universe within your heart! Contents of the skirt are also the same! What is seen when exposed are vulgar panties —[It's art if you can't see it]!"

HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEENNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGGGGGG!(Sound effect intended)

Shiroyasha was extremely suited to making sound effects.

She didn't feel shameful with all those stares, she was just a person who was pursuing the truth behind romance. Straightening her body and staring at Izayoi, she handed the binoculars in her right hand to the person who she deemed a worthy opponent, Izayoi.

"Now, use these binoculars and confirm the truth behind this world, young brave one! I believe that you'll understand true art really soon."

".....Heh! Since I was provoked by the former Demon Lord, of course I will not reject.....!"

Izayoi took one of the binoculars, and both of them started zooming in on Kuro Usagi's skirt.

To not miss the chance of a lifetime.

Asuka decided to treat both of them as air. This was also out of Japan, the culture belonging to Little Garden. She firmly believed that someday she would have to widen her eyes and view things that were simply too hard to understand.

Part 2

Kasukabe was fooling around with the calico cat at the flank of the stage, hidden from the crowd.

The helpers Jin and Leticia were currently reviewing the information about the opponent.

"——About [Will-O'-Wisp], that's all I know. I hope it will be useful on stage."

"It's okay, I'll adapt according to the situation."

Hearing Kasukabe's reply that was like an advertisement speech, Jin could only smile wryly.

The game was about to begin, with Kuro Usagi being responsible for carrying out the process of the game.

Leticia, who was beside her, unsettlingly asked:

"Are you sure you don't want any helper? I think it's better just in case something happens."

"Don't worry, It's okay."

Kasukabe firmly rejected any helper.

This time Kuro Usagi turned her body once, as if welcoming the participants on stage, spread out her arms wide.

"Then let's welcome the participants on stage! From [No Name], Kasukabe Yō, and from the other side, from the community [Will-O'-Wisp], Ayesha Ignis Fatuus."

Handing the calico cat to Jin, Kasukabe went to the pathway leading to the stage.

Suddenly——There was a high-speed mobile fireball that swept past Kasukabe.

"YAFuFUFUFUFUuuuuuu!"

"Whoa...!"

"Ojou!"

Pang! Kasukabe fell on her butt.

She lifted her head and saw the silhouette of a person sitting on top of the fireball.

The one who attacked her was —[Will-O'-Wisp]'s Ayesha, who was wearing a black-white gothic-loli dress with laces, swinging her twin tails, she used a cute, yet arrogant tone to mock Kasukabe:

"Ahhahahahaah! Did you, did you see that, Jack! The person from [No Name] got knocked down on her butt! Hehehe, okay, lets have lots of fun and laugh at her expense!"

"YAFUFUFUUUUUuuuu!"

A section of the crowd started laughing too. Looks like besides Ayesha, there were other people who were unhappy that the [No Name] community could be on the glorious stage.

Kasukabe, however, didn't care about these trivialities.

She was staring intently at the fireball.

"That fireball.....Is it....."

"Hmmm? What are you saying, don't associate my creator-gift with a fireball. This guy is [Will-O'-Wisp]'s famous specter! Jack-O'-Lantern!"

"YAFUFUFUUUUUUuuuuuu!"

Ayesha gave a meaningful glance towards the fireball. The fireball swung away the flames surrounding its body, revealing itself to the crowd. Not just Kasukabe, but everyone was momentarily stunned.

Holding a lantern that was burning fiercely, wearing shallow-black colored clothing.

A gigantic pumpkin that was probably ten times bigger than a human's head.

This shape, was exactly what Asuka admired when she was a child, the pumpkin monster.

"Jack! Izayoi-kun, look, it's Jack! The real Jack-O'-Lantern!"

"Okay, okay, I got it, please calm down, Ojou-sama."

Asuka was shouting with frantic enthusiasm, while shaking Izayoi's shoulders. It was lucky that she couldn't hear the conversation below, because on the platform below the stage, Ayesha was mockingly laughing at Kasukabe:

"Tsk ~It's only [No Name]. To dare make your introductions in front of us [Will-O'-Wisp], simply too arrogant! Today, I'll show my capabilities. You should be crying, while being grateful for having me as an opponent, you no names!"

"YAHO! YAHO! YAFUFUFUUuuuuu~♪♪♪"

Ayesha and Jack were continuously laughing at Kasukabe, who was still rooted to the floor with no intention of getting up.

If Asuka was present, she would yearn for Jack to burst.

At a distance not far away, if Kuro Usagi was not the referee, she would have erupt in anger. Although her face was not displaying it, only the people who were close with her could feel the raging anger.

"Please.....Please return to your original position, Ayesha Ignis Fatuus! And please keep the provocative behavior to yourself!"

"Okay, okay~"

With an arrogant tone and attitude, Ayesha went to the top of the stage. Patting the dust off her, Kasukabe also went up the stage. She looked around the circular stage, then proceeded to wave at Asuka and the rest.

Noticing Kasukabe's actions, Asuka also went to return the wave.

Feeling unhappy with the action, Ayesha gave her the raspberry:

"You really are full of confidence! Ignoring Jack and me, while wagging your tail at the guests and host? What? Are you trying to provoke us?"

"Nnn"

Ayesha puckered her lips, clearly provoked. Looks like it had a superior effect on her.

Although Kasukabe looked very gentle, she had another personality that wouldn't admit defeat. Because of this counter-attack, Kuro Usagi gave a sigh of relief, raising her hand to the palace balcony, she announced seriously:

"—Then before the start of the finals of the game, Shiroyasha-sama will announce the stage of the battle. Everyone please be quiet!"

At this moment all the noisy sounds dissipated. In order to listen to the [Host], silence reigned over the place. Coming to the front of the balcony and looking around the quiet stage, Shiroyasha nodded slowly.

"Okay, thanks for the cooperation. As everyone sees, my body resembles a child, it's not very convenient to speak loudly—Then, regarding the stage of the game....Firstly I would like everyone to look at the invitation letters in their hands. Are numbers written on it?"

One after another, the crowd took out their invitation letters. There were people who were frantically looking for their letters inside their luggage, while those who didn't

bring out could only sulk. Kindly looking at the crowd which was filled with both worried and expectant faces, Shiroyasha continued talking:

"Then, is there any one who has the same number as my community—[Thousand Eyes] number 3345 on their letter? If you are here, please raise up the letter high and state your community's name."

A commotion started within the crowd.

In the end there was a Dryad boy seated in front of the balcony area who raised up the invitation letter.

"Over.....Over here! Community [Underwood] has the letter with number 3345!"

A series of cheers of "Whoaaaaa!" came from the crowd. Slightly smiling, Shiroyasha disappeared from the balcony like mist, then suddenly reappearing in front of the young man.

"Hehe. Congratulations, Dryad friend from [Underwood], a souvenir will be sent to you shortly. Then, could you let me see your flag."

The young man strongly nodded his head. He took out a wooden bracelet that was carved with the scene of a city being surrounded by roots of a giant tree, likely the community's symbol. After observing the flag for a while, Shiroyasha returned the bracelet back to the young man with a smile, before reappearing back on the balcony again.

"The stage for the finals has been confirmed, then, please follow my movements."

Shiroyasha stretched out both her hands with everyone else closely following her.

Pa! Everyone clapped their hands.

Just by this movement — the whole world changed.

Part 3

There was a very dramatic change.

The floor underneath Kasukabe's foot was suddenly engulfed by nothing and started changing into a streamlined world that was spinning around. Kasukabe suddenly remembered what happened when she dueled with the griffin.

(This is.....Shiroyasha's doing.....?)

Then there was nothing to be anxious about. Kasukabe allowed her body to sink into the floor, awaiting for herself to be filtered. Accompanied by the scattering, eye-piercing light, then finally being thrown to the ends of the star.

Puuu! This was the sound of the ground that was certainly within Kasukabe's expectation. On closer look, she was stepping on what looked like a certain part of a tree.

No, This wasn't any ordinary tree—

"This tree.....No, not only the ground, this place is surrounded by roots?"

It was a huge tunnel that was surrounded by the roots of a tree in all four directions. By using her strong sense of smell to detect the scent of soil, Kasukabe deduced correctly that this was actually the roots of a tree.

The other person, who heard Kasukabe talking to herself, started using a mocking attitude to laugh at her:

"Aiyah Aiyah, thank you very much for telling us that. So we are inside roots right~?"

"....."

Not caring about that, Kasukabe turned her head aside to back-face Ayesha. Although she wasn't trying to provoke her, this action still greatly aggravated Ayesha.

Ayesha and Jack got into a fighting attitude, but were abruptly stopped by Kasukabe.

"The game hasn't started yet."

"Wuh? What are...."

"Winning conditions and losing conditions haven't been announced yet, so this game isn't official yet."

Although Ayesha was unhappy, she still felt that what Kasukabe had said was indeed correct.

Swinging her twin tails, Ayesha used a disapproving attitude to look around the tunnel formed by the roots, before murmuring:

"But right~ Worthy of being called Star class-sama, such a difference with us lower-class demons, to have such a strange game disk."

"That.....is probably not."

"Ahhhh?"

Kasukabe did not reply to her, merely shaking her head. This was the second time she was brought into Shiroyasha's disk.

The experience from last time, coupled with the transfer and the invitation letters movement.

The key thing was that she felt the low temperature, and came up with a hypothesis.

(If we can leave this place, we can probably understand the details more clearly....Oh?)

Suddenly, the empty space between those two burst open.

From inside the crack, there was Kuro Usagi, who was holding a glowing parchment.

Kuro Usagi lifted up the [Geass roll] created by the [Host Master] privilege, then proceeded to read out the contents of the paper:

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “Underwood Maze”>>

Clearing Condition(s):

***One: Participant successfully leaves the maze and come into the field**

***Two: Participant successfully breaks the opponent's gift**

***Three: When the opponent can't fulfill the winning conditions(Forfeit).**

Defeat Condition(s):

***One: Opponent fulfills one of the winning conditions.**

***Two: Participant is unable to fulfill one of the winning conditions.**

"In view of the [Trial rights], a vow of not violating the rules is to be made under the flag. And finally, please have a glorious and proud battle. Kuro Usagi shall now announce the start of the game."

After the vow made by Kuro Usagi ended, that was the whistle signalling the start of the match.

Both of them kept a distance, pondering their first move. As there were quite a number of winning conditions, naturally they hoped to have clear guidelines.

After a few seconds of awkward silence, the one who broke the ice was Ayesha with her contempt filled smile.

"Staring at each other is useless, so I'll let you move first."

".....?"

"Never mind, after all that has happened, it would be troublesome if someone started grumbling."

Shaking her twin tails and shrugging her shoulders, Ayesha revealed a leisurely smile.

Pondering for a while, Kasukabe asked Ayesha with an expressionless face:

"Are you.....[Will-O'-Wisp]'s leader?"

"Eh? I looked like the leader? It makes me happy♪, but regretful, cause Ayesha-sama me is not....."

"Is that so? I got it."

Probably because she was mistaken as a leader, Ayesha was elated, smiling cutely when replying to that question. Ignoring what she had just said, Kasukabe gave up on the conversation and started sprinting away.

"Eh.....Whuh....Wait a moment.....?"

Clearly it was Kasukabe who had started the conversation, yet ran away in the middle of it, stunning Ayesha momentarily.

Regaining her composure, Ayesha who was shaking all over started shouting angrily:

"Oi....Oi! So you are playing a fool! Since you want to do this, then I'll not hold back! Let's go, Jack! We shall go hunting in this root maze!"

"YahoYAHOHOhoho~!"

So angry that her twin tails were vertical, Ayesha started the mad chase. She shouted towards Kasukabe, who was in front of them, busy climbing the tunnel-like root gaps:

"We have the topographical advantage, burn her to death! Jack!"

"YAFUFUUuuuuuuu!"

Along with Ayesha raising up her left hand, the lantern and Jack's pumpkin head started breathing out devil flames, burning the roots while attacking Kasukabe.

Kasukabe reacted by using the minimum amount of wind to blow away the flames.

(She dodged it? No, That wind....Is that her gift?)

Looking at the flames that were changing their direction, Ayesha could not help but click her tongue.

In contrast, Kasukabe was aware of Jack-O'-Lantern's secret.

(That flame.....It's the same story as what Jin told before about the [Will-O'-Wisp].)

Kasukabe began recalling the knowledge said before the match.

—About Will-O'-Wisp's and Jack-O'-Lantern's heritage.

The former's heritage was that in a remote place, there was a sudden appearance of a bluish-white flame phenomenon, also known as will-o'-wisp.

For the latter's heritage, the spirit of a deceased that could not ascend to heaven or descend to hell, also known as Jack-O'-Lantern.

Both of these heritages left behind the same common story.

In the heritage, Jack committed two great sins during his lifetime, when he died he could only hover between the realm of the living and the dead. A sympathetic devil gave him his fire, which was currently the hell fire that was in Jack's lantern.

—[Having heritage] means [Have merit]. If it accords to this rule, then the leader of the community [Will-O'-Wisp] was most likely the [Devil of the realm of living and dead].

(Then.....If that girl wasn't the leader, then it only means that she is of a different demon or race.)

If Ayesha was really the devil that governed the realm of the living and the dead, Kasukabe has no chance of winning. The first question she'd asked was just to confirm this fact.

"AH~ Darn it! Keep on dodging here and there! Jack! Attack her from three sides at once!"

"YAFUFUFUuuuuuuu!"

Ayesha lifted up her left hand again, followed by Jack who raised up the lantern in his right hand to let out flames. Facing the fierce attack from three different sides, Kasukabe could only pass through the gap between the flames, since the gift given to her by the griffin was useless.

"........How is that possible....!"

Spitting those words out in shock was Ayesha, while this attack had allowed Kasukabe to grasp the truth behind the flames.

Which was the truth behind the [Will-O'-Wisp] bonfire.

Those flames were not produced by Jack but that girl who [Used her hand to release flammable and phosphorus-like substances].

That's right, the truth behind [Will-O'-Wisp]'s heritage was—[Bio-gas like flammable gas and substances that are released from the earth].

Because of this, will-o'-wisp would appear in lakefronts.

Originally natural gas was supposed to be odorless and tasteless, but those with keen and sensitive noses, like Kasukabe, would immediately feel that something was out of place. The reason why she could use the gift of the griffin to change the trajectory of the flames, was because she blew away the pre-launched gas or phosphorus substance.

Realizing that her hand trick had been seen through, Ayesha bit down on her teeth.

"Darn it, not good, Jack....! If this goes on, she will escape successfully!"

"Yaho.....!"

Kasukabe had an overwhelming upper hand in regards to leg strength.

Just like a leopard with their strong legs, the distance between them started to pull apart. And with Kasukabe being capable of detecting the airflow from outside using her senses, the maze was useless.

Ayesha, watching as Kasukabe started getting further and further away, gave a sigh like she had given up.

"....This is so frustrating! It can't be helped, but I'll leave the rest to you. Be serious now, Jack-san!"

"I got it."

EHH? Kasukabe turned back her head. But Jack disappeared from where he was standing, before reappearing suddenly right in front of Kasukabe's face. Face to face with the huge shadow caused by the pumpkin, Kasukabe was so shocked until she stopped her movement.

"It's not possible..."

"Sorry. but this is the truth, Ojou-san."

Accompanied with the strong voice, Jack's white hand sent Kasukabe flying.

Hitting the wall that was created by the roots, Kasukabe almost lost consciousness due to the impact. She was swarmed with nausea, making her cough.

"Guuu.....?"

"Okay, please go, Ayesha. I'll block this girl."

"I'm sorry, Jack-san. I really wanted to use my own strength to win...."

"The reason being your pride and carelessness. Do some reflection, you should learn how to control the situation of the game like this Ojou-san."

"Guuuu~.....I know."

After replying, Ayesha sprinted away while ignoring Kasukabe. Kasukabe anxiously wanted to catch up.

"Wait.....Wait a moment....."

"Of course not. Your game will end here."

Finishing his words, a little bonfire poured out of Jack's lantern.

These small flames engulfed the roots, forming a firewall around Kasukabe.

Facing with the intensity of the heat and density that was unlike before, Kasukabe could only inhale deeply while looking at Jack.

".....You are...."

"That's right, your hypothesis should be correct. I'm not a Jack-O'-Lantern created by Ayesha Ignis Fatuus, but by the one person who you were alerted against—The devil that governs the realm of living and dead! Willa the Ignis Fatuus's masterpiece! That would be me, the world's oldest pumpkin monster and ghost.....Jack-O'-Lantern♪"

"YAFUFUUuuuu♪" Jack was laughing, but the flames hidden in his eye were emitting a different radiance than before. He had a strong clear will and a soul with an oppressive feeling. His tone and actions were clearly fooling around, yet flaws still could not be found.

".....You seem to have a misunderstanding that is clearly an insult. The origin of [Will-O'-Wisp], was indeed the devil's flame. It was in order to allow humans to have a better understanding that we purposely sent out the message of the [Chemical phenomena]."

"Why....."

"Why do this kind of thing? Thats because.....[We have to tell other people that there was a corpse here]. Which means to save those sad spirits that were remorseful after being abandoned."

"YAHAHA!" Jack smiled while lifting up his thick fingers.

After the burial, the body would release bio-gas related substances. In addition, a [Will-O'-Wisp] flame will be produced, with the abandoned body being found.

".....Then....."

"You want to ask why phosphorus was used before? That is very simple. Because Ayesha died of a natural disaster, she became a self-bound spirit and hovered around until Willa gave her a shelter, now she is an outstanding earth wizard, starting to grow up. The reason why she could produce natural gas was because she was a goblin."

".....Why...."

"Why would we give shelter to an unknown spirit?—Have you heard before? The legend of [Will-O'-Wisp]. Our bluish-white flame guide, leading the dead souls to

the bonfire after they could not return. We are gradually increasing our spirit power and community's power and fame by guiding the souls."

The flames within the pumpkin's head were looking at Kasukabe.

"If you don't understand, just remember it for now. The bluish-white guide flame that depicts our community, is leading the innocent souls to the bonfire; to solace the ideal, is definitely not the area that gods manage!"

As if praising his own community's flag in that aspect, Jack opened his arms widely before announcing loudly with raging flames behind him as the background:

"Come! Young lady who holds the phylogenetic tree! Let the immortal monster, Jack-O'-Lantern be your opponent!"

Flames from hell that burned fiercely, the whole root-tunnel became a sea of fire.

The pressure that the flaming eyes produced, was the strongest opponent Kasukabe faced since coming to the Little Garden.

(.....What a pain.)

They are known as the [Devil] race, recognized by the world as extraordinary individuals that possessed spirit power.

Kasukabe Yō's whole body realized the truth before her very own eyes.

Since Ayesha had already left, the only winning condition left was to destroy Jack, however—

(.....Immortal? Since it's like this, it won't be destroyed right....)

Smiling bitterly, Kasukabe looked away. Even if he wasn't immortal, the flaming eyes had already seen through the strength of [Genome Tree]. With her trump card

revealed, Kasukabe had no chance of winning. She held the necklace hung on her neck—After a while, quietly announced the end of the game.

Part 4

As if waking from a dream, the whole venue was quiet. The moment the game was going to announce the winner, everyone moved around as if glass handicrafts were being shattered in all directions, returning back to the original circular stage.

Everyone was stunned except for Kuro Usagi who announced the results of the game as if nothing had happened.

"Winner: Ayesha Ignis Fatuus!"

Returning back to their senses, the crowd let out deafening cheers that covered the venue.

Kasukabe stood in the center of the stage enveloped by those cheers, this time Jack used a steady tone and asked her:

"Can I inquire about a matter?"

"......What?"

"This game allowed the participant to bring a helper, have you not thought about accepting your comrade's strength?"

"....."

Kasukabe did not reply, only looking at the sky. Jack gave out a sigh.

"Although it's like I'm minding someone else's business.....but your eyes show loneliness. Even if you like to do things alone, there are times when you simply need to rely on others."

"I'm not on very good terms with everyone."

"Coordination between two and relationship are different things. So far, haven't you gotten hurt just because you acted alone?"

Kasukabe could not argue back. This accusation really hit the nail on the head.

Fighting with Galdo Gasper from [Fores Garo], the results were exactly like Jack had said.

Since it was a full-scale war with [Perseus] it didn't matter, not accepting help from others could be said to be Kasukabe's negligence. Aware of this point, Jack used a mildly persuasive tone to tell Kasukabe:

"Although it's called coordination, it is necessary to rely on accumulated experience to make it work. I guess you are still too young to understand this.....Ah Ah never mind, this feels like a lecture, pumpkins just love to be meddlesome! It's hard to not say anything just by looking at your solitude-filled eyes."

Yahaha! Jack laughed while changing the subject, this time, an unhappy Ayesha came from his back.

She started at Kasukabe totally unfitting of a winner.

"Oi! You! What's your name! Came from which outer gate?"

".....It was announced from the start."

Replying uninterestedly was Kasukabe, forcing Ayesha to continue pursuing.

"Heh~ Is that so! Then at least remember my name! You [No Name]! I'm Ayesha Ignis Fatuus from Outer Gate 678900! If we have a chance to meet again, I'll be the one to win! Remember that!"

Eh? Kasukabe tilted her head, but Ayesha simply swung her twin tails and left, not letting Kasukabe inquire further. Yahaha! Jack laughed while beginning to explain.

"That child had never been defeated by anyone her age. She thinks she didn't use her own strength to win even though she was the winner."

"I think this is what you called victory using coordination."

"YAHAhaha! What you said is right!"

The pumpkin ghost patted its own forehead, laughing like he got checkmated.

Part 5

"......Kasukabe-san lost."

"Yeah, this would happen. Ojou-sama, if this bothers you then you can go comfort her."

A dejected Asuka with a smiling Izayoi.

Sandra and Shiroyasha, who were sitting in the center, used an encouraging tone to explain to Asuka:

"Although this was quite a simple game disk, it's really worth it to watch. You don't have to feel embarrassed."

"Yup, a simple game disk means that it would rely more on individual capabilities, but she, this time she controlled the situation of the game. That girl probably is better in this aspect than being independent."

Able to keep calm to the opponent's provocation while letting them lose their cool, fully utilizing the effectiveness of the situation with just a few words.

Although it seems easy, it is difficult to execute.

Although the winner was decided due to the difference in capabilities, Kasukabe, who could ignore the presence of Jack's partner while relying on her senses to gauge the airflow of the maze, could've won the game.

"[Will-O'-Wisp] is one of the strongest communities in the 6-digit outer gate, with Jack as one of the main strength, being immortal while having hell flames. The gift game instructed to kill something that couldn't be killed, that's why she could not win. This time the result was inevitable, being a battle of will."

Shiroyasha looked at Izayoi and the others with comforting eyes.

"....................?"

Izayoi's attention was no longer on the stage.

He was looking at somewhere distant, which was the sky of Little Garden.

With a surprised expression, Izayoi asked Shiroyasha:

".....Shiryosha, what is that?"

"Eh?"

Shiroyasha also looked at the sky. People noticing the strangeness let out a sound.

Like rain, large amounts of black letters started falling from the sky, Kuro Usagi took one of them.

"[Geass roll] that lets out black radiance.....It can't be.....Is it?"

Opening the sealing wax with the picture of a clown piper, what was written on the [Geass roll] was:

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “The Pied Piper of Hamelin”>>

List of Participant(s):

***Participants /hosts/communities currently in the Outer Gate of 3999999 and 4000000.**

Competitors side: Host of the game :

***Spirit of the sun and white night, Star class—Shiroyasha.**

Winner conditions for the host master:

***All participants to be massacred or pushed to submission**

Winner conditions for participants:

1. Kill the host master.

2. Shatter the false legend, making the true legend known.

Oath: *Respecting the described content, the community that host this Gift game based on their glory and flag.*

“Grimm Gimoire Hamelin” Seal

The whole stage was filled with silence when the black letters fell.

As if to break the silence, someone loudly shouted:

"The Demon Lord.....The Demon Lord has appeared AHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

Chapter 6

Part 1

—Boundary wall, 2000 meters above the ground.

In the sky, there were 4 figures that appeared above the boundary wall.

There was a woman who was wearing skimpy clothes. She had white hair and looked to be about 20 years old, playing around with the flute in her right hand while gazing at the stage area below her foot.

"The ones that can qualify as our opponents.....Including the Ojou-san from [Salamandra], there are 4 others right, Weser?"

"No, 3 people. The pumpkin cannot participate. The tough ones are the vampire and the fire dragon Floor Master — we should dispose of them along with the fake [Rattenfänger]."

The person who responded to the white clothed girl was a man called Weser. He had black hair and wore a black military uniform.

The third person was definitely not human.

The flute he was holding was different from the white clothed girl's; it was probably as long as the man's height. If it was a musical instrument, it was certainly of an abnormal length.

It had a smooth appearance similar to pottery material, with many dug up vents visible along the lower to the upper parts of the body. To say it more simply, it was about fifty feet high and looked like an anthropomorphic flute.

The place where its face was supposed to be had a specifically huge vent which emitted a strange sound and vibration.

Standing in the center of the three was a girl wearing a black and white polka-dotted dress.

After looking at the others' faces, the girl expressionlessly announced with a dull tone:

"—The gift game has started, I'll trouble you to go according to the scheduled plan."

"Yes! What if there was someone who got in our way?"

"Kill them."

"Understood, my master♪"

Part 2

The change first started from the balcony of the palace.

Dark wind suddenly appeared and enveloped Shiroyasha, forming a translucent ball around her surroundings.

"Wuhh.....What....!"

"Shiroyasha-sama!"

Sandra reached out her hand towards Shiroyasha but was blocked by the raging dark wind.

The dark wind blew stronger and everyone was thrown off the balcony apart from Shiroyasha.

"Yaaaa.....!"

"Ojou-sama, hold on to me!"

The thrown Izayoi immediately embraced Asuka while looking at the figures in the sky far away.

"Tsk! Members of [Salamandra] are being blown to the audience seating area!"

The members of the [No Name] fell to the stage while the members of [Salamandra] were flung to the audience seating area.

After confirming that Jin and the others had safely walked out of the stage area, Izayoi turned his head and asked Kuro Usagi:

"The situation now.....Is the appearance of a Demon Lord, right?"

"Yes."

As Kuro Usagi earnestly replied while nodding her head, tension arose in everyone.

The crowd around the stage area was thrown into confusion; with everyone trying to escape from the scene of the Demon Lord, it certainly was like the saying: "Cover one's head and scurry away like a rat to its hole."

Amidst the clamor, Izayoi stood in the center of the venue wearing a frivolous smile on his face.

He used a serious expression to look at Kuro Usagi, different from the usual calmness he always had.

"Shiroyasha's [Host permission] has not been cracked, right?"

"Right. Since Kuro Usagi is the judgement controller, it is not that easy to break through."

"So those guys appeared on the game disk while respecting the rules....Haha, they really don't disappoint me, the real Demon Lord-sama."

"So what now? Do we fight here?"

"Yeah, but it would not be a smart idea to engage with this many people, and I would also like to know the situation on [Salamandra]'s side. That was the direction where those guys attacked."

"Then Kuro Usagi shall go find Sandra-sama first. Izayoi-san and Leticia-sama should go on the offensive against the Demon Lord. Kuro Usagi will leave Jin-bocchan to take care of Shiroyasha-sama."

"I understand."

Leticia and Jin nodded their heads; in contrast, Asuka's face was filled with discontent.

"Heh.....Excluding me from something interesting."

"Don't say that, Ojou-sama. Since the [Geass Roll] mentioned that Shiroyasha is the game leader, we'll have to confirm if this point will cause any influence—"

"Please wait a moment."

Everyone turned their heads to the source of the sound, which was actually Ayesha and Jack from [Will-O'-Wisp].

"We understand the gist of everything; our community [Will-O'-Wisp] will agree to help if you want to engage the Demon Lord. Okay, Ayesha?"

"Un.....Un, I will do my best."

Ayesha who was forcefully dragged into the Demon Lord game nervously agreed.

"Then both of you will assist Kuro Usagi in finding Sandra-sama and listen to her instructions."

With everyone nodding their heads, they headed out to do the tasks assigned to them.

At that moment, screams could be heard from the scattering crowd:

"Look! The Demon Lord is coming down!"

The figures in the sky had started descending.

Seeing that situation, Izayoi clenched his fist and shouted towards Leticia:

"Then lets go! I'll take the black and white ones; the big and small I'll leave it to you!"

"Understood, Master."

Leticia blandly replied. Izayoi happily bent down - using a strength that could literally break the stage, he jumped towards the boundary wall.

Part 3

"What?!"

This panicky shout came from the black-uniform wearing man.

Within a second, Izayoi had used all his strength to arrive in front of the man's face, smacking the man against the boundary wall faster than the third cosmic velocity.

After crashing into the wall and creating a huge crack, the man glared at Izayoi and spat out:

"You.....What the hell!"

"I've been expecting you, Demon Lord-sama. Can I have this dance?"

Izayoi gave out a 'Yahaha' smile and started using his brute force to drag the man up the wall horizontally as if the wall was like water.

Although the black-uniformed man was dragged up the wall, with his face in constant friction, he could still roar while remaining uninjured:

"Don't look down on us, you twerp!"

Waving his staff-like flute, it produced a strange wind noise.

A disturbance was created on the wall, forcing Izayoi to stop. Taking this chance, the uniformed man escaped from Izayoi's grasp.

Probably because there were some injuries in his mouth, he spat out some red-colored liquid and told Izayoi:

".....You really have something up your sleeves, never thought the initiative would be seized first."

"I'll have to thank you for that. Well my report card did always evaluate me as a [Full of accidents boy]. I'm always full of confidence, no matter good or bad, disrupting people's expectations is certainly my forte."

Izayoi who let out a 'Yahaha' was currently standing vertically on the wall.

Looking both ridiculous and unusual, his ankle was currently buried deep into the rock, resembling nails.

While the two were conversing, the polka-dots girl as well as the pottery-made giant soldier had already descended down, while a young girl who was grabbing onto the wall shouted towards the uniformed man:

"Weser! Hurry up and finish this!"

"What? Then wouldn't it be faster if you use your flute's noise to catch hold of him?"

The girl puckered her lips and brought the flute to her mouth.

At this moment, the crowd that was originally pushing around came to a stop.

A discordant note was played that enveloped the whole area, without any immunity to the sound. When the crowd heard the sound, they started to bend down on their knees as if feeling dizzy.

The abnormal situation happening below widened Izayoi's eyes, then he immediately leaked out a proud smile and responded:

"Oh....? Is this the magic flute? So is that girl the real [Rat-catcher Clown]?"

While the crowd slowly lost their reasoning of what they were doing, Izayoi stood there as if nothing had happened.

"This....This guy....! My music doesn't work.....?"

The white-shirt wearing girl inhaled deeply, with her beautiful lips trembling.

In contrast, Weser who retained his composure first winked to the girl.

"Ratten, you go down first. If your master is alone, she will kill everyone."

After Ratten puckered her lips again, she jumped downwards.

Looking at her leave and not showing any sign of trying to pursue, Izayoi just merely stood at his original position.

Perhaps feeling quite surprised, Weser looked at Izayoi with probing and puzzled eyes.

"........I don't get it, why did you let her go?"

"It's not something that serious, I can slowly catch her after I'm done with you, [Avatar of the Weser River]."

Feeling surprised yet again, Weser's expression became distorted. The Weser river Izayoi mentioned was the huge river that flowed nearby Hamelin city. Confirming what he said was true just by looking at the man's expression, Izayoi used a more interesting attitude and ridiculed the opponent:

"Heh, adding [Ratten] and [Weser River]. With the [Shatter the False Legend, Making the True Legend known] written on the [Geass roll].....Oi oi, why did you guys let me solve the game that quickly? In other words, you guys are demons born from the legend of the [Piper of Hamelin], the [Killing method] for the sacrifice of the 130 kids which itself turned into spirits right?"

Izayoi kept his smile while looking at Weser sharply.

This smile was completely different from his usual flirty smile, much more fiercer than before.

The legend mentioned by Izayoi, was the inscription on the stained glass that Jin had mentioned before.

—Year 1284, John and Paul diary 26th of June.

130 children born in Hamelin were seduced by a piper, dressed in all kinds of colors, the children were all lost at the place of execution near the hills.—

The race of demons gained spirit power [Based on the Impact of the World, you get to receive it through influence, contribution, compensation and reward].

Thus Izayoi had speculated that, the demons that gained spirit power through the Brother Grimms' story of [Piper of Hamelin], was because the [130 children] were sacrificed.

"There were many different possibilities behind the legend of Hamelin city, like the children being kidnapped or they were "spirited away", black magic ceremonies etc..... Regarding the possibility of [Weser river]— was the cause of natural disaster. For example, the spirit power you have that could give you the power to create a disturbance in this wall is most likely based on landslides and landslips. And to fulfill the condition of [Shatter the false legend, making the true legend known], it can be interpreted as figuring out the true cause of the incident in Hamelin to win.....How was it? I dare not say it's full marks, but at least above 80 right?"

Izayoi laughed proudly, the one quietly listening to him was Weser, who scratched his head while giving out a bitter smile.

"Che! I thought you were just some twerp.....In the end you are quite smart."

"Really?"

"Whoa.....Nevermind, rules are rules, it appears you have something to offer, let me ask you something...."

"I reject."

"That was too fast already!"

"Because I'm not interested in accompanying people who already knew the answer this early. Don't disappoint me, Demon Lord-sama. It will not be fun if the game was finished the moment it started right? Didn't you know that I specifically came to this world just to meet a Demon Lord!"

What Izayoi had remarked was not false in any way. After coming to the Little Garden for over a month—His dream was to participate in a Demon Lord game. Izayoi declared confidently with a bulging chest.

"......Oh? Then I'll have to apologize, kid."

Weser's response seemed to be quite sentimental.

He leaked out a ferocious smile, before swinging his staff-like flute forcefully. The sharp sound enveloped the area and dramatic changes started to happen on the rock, eventually it became smooth like before.

Weser landed on the flat surface and got into a fighting stance.

"In response to your expectations, I will have to make some amendments.—I am not the Demon Lord, I'm only a low-leveled demon. Our Demon Lord excellency, is one of those two below."

Izayoi gazed downwards to what Weser had directed, there was a huge pottery-looking monster and a polka-dotted dress wearing girl currently battling with Leticia.

With Leticia currently at a disadvantage. Izayoi unhappily announced:

"Is that so? Then let's finish this opening act, or else it would be rude to the Demon Lord."

"What stupid words are you saying? The opening act was the sizzling atmosphere. To have the best opening act is the greatest climax —Never mind, looking at you, maybe that doesn't even qualify as a opening act right?"

Heh! Both of them got into their fighting stance while laughing.

Both of them started running, creating huge cracks in the boundary wall, with both rocks and dust falling together.

Weser used the flute to receive Izayoi's fist which could break the mountains and rivers.

The huge force that Weser received made him surprised, but he took one big step back to support his feet.

After fighting against [Perseus] former Demon Lord, Algol, no one else could receive Izayoi's blow.

While fighting, Izayoi was happily laughing.

"Ha! Looks like this will turn out to be a great opening act....!"

"Che! Those were my lines, you twerp—!"

After roaring, Weser used his strength to swing the huge flute across.

One thousand feet above the sky. Izayoi and Hamelin's demon were having a heated battle.

At the other side. Leticia started a confrontation with the polka-dotted dress wearing girl and the pottery-like giant soldier. The pottery-like giant soldier exhaled air out of its vents, creating huge whirlwinds in every direction.

"BRUUUUUUUUM!"

"Guuu....."

The air responded with a strange voice which started the vibration. The rubble on the ground started getting absorbed by the turbulent whirlwind.

Leticia originally was going to spread our her wings and fly, but couldn't move smoothly due to the turbulence created by the enemy. The polka-dotted dress wearing girl used her eyes that were lacking vitality to look at Leticia.

"Are you really a pureblood Vampire?"

"That was such a harsh criticism! I'm fighting with all I got.....!"

Letting down her blond hair, Leticia replied in a bitter tone. However, when she heard the giant soldier's name, she realized something.

(Sturm—"Storm right?" Then that giant soldier must be a demon related to natural disasters.....!)

Although she lost a lot of strength due to losing her divinity, Leticia still acquired lots of experience from different games. That's why she was very sure when facing Demon Lord games, even the subtlety of intelligence was very important; Also knowing the enemy's name may be an important factor in solving the game.

(No matter what I'll have to obtain information about that girl.)

"That's enough Sturm, I don't want this girl anymore, kill her."

The young girl gave the death sentence expressionlessly. This was probably the best signal to explain, the so-called Sturm would fire something like a mortar after it has collected and compressed the rubble together.

"BRUUUUUUUUUM!"

The huge holes on the giant soldier's face fired out rubble to attack Leticia.

However at this moment, Leticia kept her wings, suddenly increased her speed to close the distance with the two.

".....Eh?"

"I won't apologize, it's the fault of the deceived."

Leticia laughed proudly. Even if the opponent realized that the act before was a farce, it was already too late. Taking out a gold and black gift card, a long-handled spear flew through the sky and pierced the girl's chest.

"Did it succeed—!"

"No it didn't."

The girl replied in a cadence tone. What was more shocking was, the spear that Leticia had thrust only lifted the body of the girl, with the spearhead becoming flat upon contact with the girl's chest.

The polka-dotted girl easily grabbed hold of the spear and pulled Leticia towards herself, releasing black wind from her hand to bind Leticia.

(What.....What is this? This strange wind....?)

Even Leticia was clueless about this strange wind.

It was unlike dark shadows, was also unlike a frenzy storm, wasn't even close to being hot air.

If one would describe it, it was a dusky, tepid, strange wind.

Like a wriggling creature, it slowly eroded all of Leticia's awareness.

The polka-dotted girl reined in Leticia's chin and collar, revealing a shallow smile.

"It hurt, It really hurt, but I'll forgive you....ah, about the words I've said before, looks like you'll be a wonderful pawn."

Smiling with a *Hehe*, the black wind that the polka-dotted girl produced started to cover up Leticia's body, as if wanting to corrode her.

When the turbulence caused by Sturm shook the chandeliers illuminating the boundary wall—A red flash shot through the pottery-like giant soldier.

"BRUUUUUUUUUUUUUM!"

After being shot through the center, the pottery-like giant soldier started to dissolve, before collapsing like wreckage and returning back to dust. Taking advantage of when the polka-dotted girl was looking at the sky, Leticia moved her arms and pulled away to the distance.

However, her body could not muster any more strength, going down on one knee, she squatted on the ground.

Ignoring Leticia, the polka-dotted girl lifted up her gaze.

"......Is that so, you finally appeared."

There was something else shining that was not from the chandelier. Holding up the burning flame dragon, was the northern district [Floor Master]—Sandra, who was looking down with dragon flame surrounding her whole body.

The wind blew on the polka-dotted girl's dress, looking up at Sandra, she smiled.

"I've been waiting, was just worrying of the thought that you ran away."

"........What's your motive? Hamelin's Demon Lord."

"Ah. You've got it wrong. The correct term for my gift is [Black Death Demon Lord]."

".........24th generation of [Fire Dragon], Sandra."

"Thank you for the self-introduction. You don't need me to tell the motive, you should be quite clear right? I want to have the sun dominion rights from Shiroyasha and the remains of the Stellar Sea Dragon King. In other words, what you are wearing on your head"

"So give it to me", the girl's tone was clearly meant for demanding, while she pointed at the crown on Sandra's head.

".....So that's how it is, very befitting of the Demon Lord title, so rude and disrespectful. However, as the protector of peace, I'll not allow this wrongful act to go on. I will definitely punish you under the name of my flag."

"Really? So impressive, Floor Master."

The strange black windstorm blocked the raging dragon flame.

The attacks that collided with each other created such a huge shockwave that the chandeliers illuminating the boundary wall shattered.

The fragments of the chandeliers festooned both of their battles, before disappearing after letting out light.

Part 4

—Festival operation headquarters, entrance of balcony.

At this time, Asuka and the rest were at a loss of what to do at the balcony area.

Because the same black wind that blew them away was currently blocking their advancement.

Unable to enter the wind had frustrated Asuka, who could only shout to Shiroyasha on the other side:

"Shiroyasha ! How's the situation inside?"

"Not clear! But my actions are clearly restricted ! Is there anything else written in the [Geass roll]?"

Jin hurriedly picked up the black [Geass roll].

The text written on it decomposed to straight lines and curves, forming new contents.

#Matters regarding participation of the game:

***War conditions have not been fulfilled for the game leader.**

#For the game leader to participate in the war, please fulfill the war conditions.

"It says that the war conditions for the game leader have not been fulfilled.....?"

"What about the war conditions? Any other things written on it?"

"No.....Nothing else is written."

Shiroyasha angrily clicked her tongue. According to her knowledge, there was only one method for sealing Star class spirits in this form. Once again she shouted:

"Everyone listen carefully! Convey every word to Kuro Usagi that I'm about to say! There is no room for failures! Your mistakes may well lead to the death of many participants!"

If it was the usual Shiroyasha, it was really difficult to see her produce a tone that was filled with tension and urgency. This also shows that it was something very important.

Asuka and the rest took in a huge breath before waiting for Shiroyasha's instruction.

"Firstly, this game might have [Made the rules so that it is not perfect]! One of the underhanded methods a Demon Lord would use! The most severe case is, this [Game doesn't have any methods for solving]!"

"Eh....!"

"Secondly, tell Kuro Usagi that this Demon Lord might be attached to a new community!"

"I.....I've got it!"

There was no time for any detailed explanation. Even Asuka understands that every second counts.

"Thirdly, the method for sealing me is most likely—"

"Okay~ We'll stop it at there♪"

Shiroyasha turned around like a startled child.

There was a white-shirt wearing lady—The one called Ratten, currently standing behind Shiroyasha with three fire lizard-men.

The three fire lizard-men were obviously members from [Salamandra], so they probably got manipulated by the lady's magic flute. The fire lizard-men kept spitting hot sparks, with insanity filling their eyes.

"Aiyah.....So it really did seal her♪ To have the strongest Floor Master fall to this degree is such an embarrassment!"

"Damn it.....What did you do to the [Salamandra] members!"

"That is of course a secret. Even if the sealing was a success, I don't intend on revealing the information to you.....Having said that, who were you talking to just now?"

Ratten shifted her sights to the entrance.

Lifting her flute up like a baton, the fire lizard-men started attacking.

"YAHA!"

"Aiyah? Human? I thought it was the leader of [Salamandra]....Nevermind, it was worth mentioning."

Revealing an expression as if she had no interest, Ratten once again waved her flute.

With insanity-filled eyes, the fire lizard-men pounced towards Asuka and the rest.

"Asuka!"

Kasukabe had to resort to kicking down the huge two meter body. But the weight difference was clearly incomparable, although the fire lizard-men received that attack, they immediately stood back up.

"Asuka! Jin! Grab onto me!"

"Ah....Okay!"

The fire lizard-men did not commit any sins, they were just being manipulated. Feeling that she could not take down that many enemies in one hit while holding back, Kasukabe grabbed onto both of their hands and whipped up a whirlwind.

Looking at the strength of the gift from the Gryphon, the slightly shocked Ratten opened her mouth:

"Aiyah, this strength.....Is it Gryphon related? What a special human, hmmmm, taking a closer look, you are quite cute.....Okay! I've decided! I'll allow you to be my pawn!"

Ignoring the jubilant Ratten, Kasukabe grabbed onto Asuka and Jin, heading to escape through the corridor.

Ratten did not bother to chase, she merely exposed a flirtatious smile, before lifting up the flute.

The palace sounded high and low—a beautiful magic sound.

This sound was different from yesterday, it was a much more seductive sound that stimulated the central organs.

The effect greatly affected Kasukabe, who had a stronger sensory sensitivity than others.

She started grinding her teeth to fight back, but gradually started to relax her muscles, before her awareness was eroded.

"Ah.....No.....This.....!"

"Ya!"

"Worh!"

With the whirlwind suddenly disappearing, the weak Kasukabe dumped the people she was originally carrying.

The lower parts of Kasukabe's body started trembling, extruding the remaining of her strength, she shouted:

"That guy is going to come.....Asuka, Jin! Run....!"

"Don't say such idiotic words! Jin-chan!"

"Yes.....Yes!"

A stiff expression was on Jin's face.

Taking a deep breath, as if making up her mind, Asuka murmured:

"I'll have to apologize first....Sorry."

Eh? Jin tilted his head.

An apologetic look flashed across Asuka's face.

"As the leader of the community— **You will now bring Kasukabe-san to find Kuro Usagi.**"

She dominated the heart of her comrade.

Unlike the last time, this was intentional.

".....I understand."

The consciousness in Jin's eyes started to fade. Listening to Asuka's orders, he took Kasukabe and left the scene.

If it was the usual him, he would've insisted on staying. He had a strong integrity even though he did not have much strength.

However, Asuka decided to use her own will to distort that integrity of his.

Even while knowing that Jin will be deep in remorse about his act of leaving her behind.

(.....So sorry, Jin-kun.)

Asuka sadly looked at the shadow of the two escaping—After that she faced the enemy behind, her expression filled with anger.

".....Aiyaya? Only you? What about your comrades?"

"They left you for me and departed. Saying that a third-rate demon like you should be easy for me alone."

"......Oh?"

Ratten squinted her eyes, assessing Asuka , before laughing cheerfully.

"Part of those words are lies. Your eyes do not look like you are being relied on, but shouldering the responsibility.....Yes, very much in line with my preferences. Ah~ Really~ Never expected that there was so much good talent! Now I don't even know who should I pick!"

Ratten was giggling without any concern. Asuka looked at the white clothes that Ratten was wearing, confirming if she did not have any other weapon besides her flute.

(.....The legend of the clown piper was that he could "Manipulate both rats and humans." If the saying goes, then her enforcement power won't be that strong. If it was under the same condition, my power will be victorious....!)

In order to dispel her nervousness, Asuka took in a deep breath. If she wanted to get involved, she would have to start out strong. Since Ratten was scorning Asuka, she took her her gift card and shouted:

"Everyone— **Stand still at your current positions!**"

Eh? Ratten leaked out dumbfounded words.

At that moment, including the fire lizard-men, even Ratten was restrained. Receiving the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Asuka took out the silver cross sword from the gift game and jumped forward towards Ratten.

Raising the sword to eye level, she aimed the silver cross sword that was capable of breaking evil force towards the enemy's heart, stabbing it forcefully.

"—Guu...! You are too naive, little girl!"

Two sounds of metals smacking together resounded. Ratten had shook off the restraint, waved her hand to smack the sword aside, not caring about her previous overwhelmed position. Even if the attack was aimed perfectly at the heart, it was easily bounced away.

Asuka got smacked into the wall and started coughing.

(Damn.....Damn it.....! If my physical capabilities were at least half of Kasukabe-san...!)

This situation made Asuka feel that her strength was very low.

Kudou Asuka was a [Dominater], but not a [User].

Her body was exactly like an ordinary 15-year old girl.

This was the case where if one doesn't recognize their own areas of expertise, defeat would be inevitable.

"It's really shocking.....Although it was unexpected, you could restrain me for a few seconds. What a strange power you possess. Trying to rein in a Demon Lord that you just met, you have guts♪"

Pong! Ratten was laughing while fiercely kicking at Asuka.

".....Guu....!"

With her pride, Asuka forcefully kept the vomit from coming out.

Although the things she had swallowed included blood, she continued to swallow.

She could've emptied out everything from inside, but defeat was better than suffering the humiliation of it.

Revealing unyielding eyes while still suffering from pain, Asuka grabbed onto Ratten's white clothes.

"You.....Haven't noticed yet.....the fire lizard-men from [Salamandra] had already escaped."

"It isn't that bad, those kind of small fries. If I got you, both of us can have as much as we want, right!"

Pong! Suffering from another fierce attack, Asuka fainted.

Ratten lifted up Asuka's limp body and grabbed her chin to face her.

".....Such a beautiful kid. The previous one was also not bad, but you look much more attractive."

Just like this, Ratten carried Asuka, humming while returning back to Shiroyasha's side. Looking at Asuka who had lost consciousness, Shiroyasha's white hair pricked up, staring at Ratten with killing intent emanated.

"Youu.....!"

"Hehe, no matter how much you stare it's useless. This seal was set up by my master using the [Host's permission], even if you are the strongest Floor Master, you can't defeat the Little Garden's strength right?"

"Gu.....?"

"When I was still in the [Fantasy magic book], I've already heard about your monstrous strength. After you won the gift game for the rights over the sun, to suppress your own strength, you entered Buddhism[2] against the strongest sun star-class.....The strength you had that was powerful enough to win against the sun that managed the world, the Golden Demon Lord, [Halloween Queen]. This strength, will be for [Grimm Grimoire Hamelin]'s use after this!"

Ratten who had already decided that they were going to win, let out an arrogant laughter.

Like dancing, Ratten twirled her body and stood on the balcony, spreading both hands.

"Okay! [Grimm Grimoire Hamelin], the main event for the game is about to begin! Lets have a wild round of applause please!"

Standing on the balcony, she started playing the melody of the magic flute.

Not only did the beautiful melody spread to the stage area, it even expanded until it engulfed the foot of the boundary wall.

The magic flute that could manipulate people started to gradually erode the participant's awareness. The awareness-captured participants started to attack their comrades or spread around the destruction.

As the main force of the participant side was currently in battle, nobody was able to stop Ratten.

With their thinking being dominated, the communities that were forced to yield one by one started to leave the game.

When everyone thought that the winner was about to be decided, a loud thunder sounded.

"Stop now!"

Ratten stopped the song and looked up towards the sky.

"That thunder just now.....unless it's...!"

Ratten jumped from the balcony to the roof of the place. The source of the deafening thunder sounds, was the gift that belonged to the god of Indra—[Simulation of godhead·Vajra], with the current wielder being Kuro Usagi.

Lifting up the shining and glowing Vajra, Kuro Usagi loudly announced:

"The [Trial jurisdiction] has been approved! The gift game, [The Pied Piper of Hamelin], will be suspended, while deliberations towards a resolution for this matter will be held. Players and Hosts, please cease hostilities! I repeat this one more time—
"

Chapter 7

Part 1

—Boundary wall, Stage area. Festival operation headquarters, hall.

The company and the other participants came into the palace interior. In the case where the wounded were everywhere, Kuro Usagi and Jin immediately jumped in front of Izayoi after they spotted him.

"Izayoi-san, are you alright!"

"There is no problem here, what about the others?"

"It's regrettable, everyone is injured beside Kuro Usagi and Izayoi-san. Asuka-san is still missing.....I'm terribly sorry, if I had more vigor....!"

Jin lowered his head in remorse. Although he wasn't wrong, but he is placing the responsibilities on himself. At another side, Kasukabe and Leticia were both tired due to their engagement with the enemy, totally not in any position to resume their battle. After confirming the situation, Kuro Usagi opened her mouth with a pained tone:

"After receiving the words from Shiroyasha-sama, Kuro Usagi had immediately applied for deliberations for a resolution.....But it looks like it was too late."

"Hmmmm, what is the meaning of applying for deliberations?"

"The [Trial Jurisdiction] is one of the privilege of a judgement controller, it is to confirm if the rules created by the [Host's permission] are imperfect."

"Imperfect rules?"

"YES. According to what Jin-bocchan said, the so-called [The winning conditions may not have been established correctly] and the [Participant] can discuss whether

the rules are imperfect. And because you can forcefully interrupt the gift game, in another meaning, it is to tackle the strange jurisdiction of the Demon Lord."

"Whoa.....? In simpler words it means a suspension right? If the game can restart without any condition, this is quite a powerful permission granted."

Izayoi admirably said.

However with a bizarre expression, Kuro Usagi repeatedly shook her head.

"No, It's not like that. Since the deliberations for a resolution to review the rules have already been sent, this is the game between [Host] and the [Participant].....Guuu, to say it in simpler words, it means that [There will be no grudge in this gift game] this kind of inviolability contract."

Hearing what Kuro Usagi had said, Izayoi twitched his eyebrow.

".....In other words, if we lose, the other members of [Thousand Eyes] and [Salamandra] cannot instigate a gift game towards a Demon Lord because of revenge?"

"YES. So if we lose, we will not receive any help, better be prepared."

"HA! If you have such a negative mindset, then how are we going to win!"

Izayoi couldn't help but laugh it out. This time, the hall's door opened, with Sandra and Mandra walking in. Keeping a nervous expression, Sandra announced to the participants:

"We will hold the deliberations for a resolution with the Demon Lord now. The [Highborn of Little Garden] Kuro Usagi, [Salamandra]'s Mandra. And others who are familiar with the [Piper of Hamelin], please come assist us with the negotiations. Are there any willing parties?"

The participants' side started a commotion. Kuro Usagi had once said before, people are limited with the child's stories, and even if they do, there wouldn't be too many people who know the clear details of the story.

In the situation where nobody stood up, Izayoi grabbed the back of Jin's gown.

"Regarding [The Piper of Hamelin], this Jin Russel knows it better than anyone else!"

"......Ah? Ehh? Wait....Wait a moment.....Izayoi-san!"

Hearing Izayoi's sudden words, Jin got startled.

Izayoi continued speaking with a half-serious half-joking tone:

"Very familiar! Ultra familiar! Definitely useful! Regarding this matter, contributions will be made towards [Salamandra], besides the leader of [No Name] Jin Russel, there is no one else!"

"Jin eh?"

Sandra looked surprised. Although she replied with a childish tone, she immediately regained her determined expression.

"If no one else is willing, then we'll be relying on Jin Russel of [No Name], is it possible?"

Sandra's decision widened the commotion.

"[No name].....?" "From which community?" "Is it trustworthy?" "Is it the community that participated in that competition?" "This is just too exaggerative." "Oi, is there anyone else who could—"

Although everyone's opinions were being counterparts, nobody was willing to volunteer for that role.

And if they allowed [No Name] to be a representative, they would feel uneasy as the decisions made in the conference would change their fates. Jin did not volunteer because he had sensed this kind of atmosphere, but Izayoi whispered to him with a cheeky yet sinister expression:

"Are you an idiot? What were the efforts you used every night in the stack room for? Of course you must put this opportunity to good use."

"But....But...."

Jin averted his gaze. The days he spent in the stack room was not just to introduce Izayoi to Little Garden. Because of a lack of capabilities and the desire to contribute to the community, Jin was extremely hardworking. And the convenient thing was, this was a game where knowledge could be applied.

"If you are concerned with the views from the people, yeah, it's considered a good thing. If not wanting to give other people trouble is your survival path, then I won't complain—But, you are our representative, so if you run away now, the same situation may occur in the future. Am I wrong?"

"Guuuuu."

Hearing Izayoi's speech, Jin looked up while clenching his teeth. At this moment, the gazes were concentrated on him.

Uneasy and unhappy. In the midst of all the negative views, only Kuro Usagi and Sandra gave out expectant gazes.

"You don't want to be acknowledged as a parasite right? Didn't you say you want to change? So look onwards and show your vigor-filled performance and seize the initiative, Our [Leader]?"

"Yes....Yes!"

Being called a leader must've made Jin quite happy, who energetically replied.

Using the chance, Izayoi lifted Jin's shoulders and showed the surrounding people what he looked like.

"Okay, let's go, Chibi-Sama! If you get famous because of this, then we should print leaflets formally! What will be written on it will be: [If you are harassed by a Demon Lord, please contact Jin Russel]!"

Jin panicky shouted out:

"I..... Didn't I say that I don't want it! And why must you write the name out?"

"Of course you must, didn't I say that you are our representative ..... Nevermind, if Chibi-sama is not willing, then we'll change it to [If you are harassed by a Demon Lord, please contact Jin Russel]."

"Isn't that tooo weird right! What's the use of covering up something that doesn't need to be covered!"

The protesting Jin, and the troublemaker Izayoi.

Sandra and Kuro Usagi looked at each other, unable to resist but smile by the sidelines.

Part 2

—Boundary wall, Stage area. Festival operation headquarters, VIP room.

"Then, let us start the discussion regarding the gift game [THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN]."

Announced Kuro Usagi in a serious tone. Sitting in front of Izayoi and company were the polka-dressed girl, with the military-uniformed Weser and the white-clothed Ratten right beside her.

(Whoa? The one at the side are [Ratten (Rat)] and [Weser river] right? And also, I've heard that Sandra fought against the giant called [Sturm (Storm)] right? Then the one in the middle is.....nevermind, I'll think about it later.)

Izayoi who sat beside Jin paused his train of thoughts.

The room everyone was currently in was the luxuriously decorated interior of a VIP room. The supposed invited guests were not in the game, so they were not present. For negotiations to take place about the game, naturally they couldn't do it in the hall, before finally deciding to use the VIP room.

"For the [Host] side, regarding this game....."

"There is nothing missing."

The polka-dotted girl interrupted Kuro Usagi's speech and replied with disdain:

"This game does not have anything missing or anything unusual, it is a game that has satisfactory rules before the commencement, there is no reason to accept a deliberation."

Her eyes were calm and she spoke in an emphatic tone.

".....So it's already dealt with? Kuro Usagi's ears are connected to the Little Garden central network, it will immediately spot it if you lie."

"Yeah. And also, I like to suggest something now. We are now suffering unjustified accusations and as a result the game was interrupted, in other words, you are making lame interferences against a sacred game—Know what I mean right?"

The young lady looked at Sandra with leisurely eyes, resigning Sandra to biting her teeth.

"Meaning that if there weren't any unusual ways.....then the game will restart with the same conditions as stated before?"

"That's right, so we should now start the negotiation regarding the addition of new rules."

"........I understand, Kuro Usagi."

"Yes...Yes."

The slightly wavered Kuro Usagi nodded her head. She probably did not anticipate that the opponent would show such a firm attitude. Kuro Usagi looked at the sky, slightly shaking her rabbit ears.

Using the chance, Izayoi whispered to Mandra who was behind him:

"In what circumstance is a game unfair?"

".....You dare come with us when you don't even know these things?"

Mandra angrily spat those words out.

"You should know, there isn't something wrong if the participant's capabilities and knowledge are inadequate. So if the orders are to kill an undead or to fly, it is the participants' own problem. In the long run, even if we need the knowledge regarding the legend of [Piper of Hamelin] to solve this game, which means [The fault lies with the participants who don't know]."

"Whoa? That's quite unreasonable."

"If there is something missing in this game, then firstly it must be the seal on Shiroyasha. Although the Geass roll stated that she can [Participate], but she is unable to [Fight]. This point cannot be ignored, which should be expressly mentioned as a main reason."

"And also the contents which only rate [Shatter the false legend, making the true legend known]."

The both of them interrupted the conversation.

After having a deep thought—Kuro Usagi embarrassingly lowered her head.

"......Kuro Usagi has received a reply from Little Garden. There isn't anything missing or unusual in this game. The seal on Shiroyasha-sama was cast under legal ways."

The sound of people biting their teeth could be heard in the VIP room, this time the participants were the underdogs.

"That is a natural result. Then, the rules will stay the same, the problem is when the game will restart."

"Date? Must it be tomorrow?"

Sandra felt very unprepared, so did the surrounding people.

Because this was to give the obviously disadvantaged participants time, the reaction was natural.

After all, in the current situation, even if the opponents want the match to start immediately, it wouldn't be weird.

"Let me ask something to the judge master, when is the latest time the game can resume."

"The.....The latest right? Guu....Let me see.....About one month?"

"Then, let's use one month—"

"Wait!"

"Please wait a moment."

Izayoi and Jin both let out their voices at the same time, with their tone being tense.

".....What? Is the given time not satisfactory?"

"No, I'm very grateful for that, but it's according to the situation.....I can wait, Chibi-sama you can talk first."

"Okay. Then let me ask the host. The lady and man beside you are [Ratten] and [Weser], and also another member called [Sturm]. Then your name.....Is it [Black Death (Pest)]?"

"Did you just say black death?"

Everyone's face was distorted due to their surprise, staring at the polka-dotted in disarrayment. This of course was the natural reaction.

—Black death, It happened in the 14th century after the mini ice age, the most serious plague that ever happened in human history. This disease would cause sepsis in the blood, with black spots appearing on the infected before dying.

The clown that appeared in Grimm's child story [Piper of Hamelin] was wearing a black-spotted uniform.

And the clown could manipulate the biggest cause for the black death, rats.

In accordance to the two points described, there were speculations that [The death of the 130 children was because of black death].

"Pest.....Is it, so your gift name is [Demon Lord of Black Death]!"

"Yes, that's right. He's correct. Right Demon Lord-sama?"

".....Yes, that's right."

The calmly smiling young girl —Pest nodded her head.

"Not bad, anonymous gentleman. If it's convenient, can I request you and your community's name?"

".....I am [No Name] Jin Russel"

Hearing the name of the community, Pest widened her eyes in surprise.

"Is that so, I'll remember.....But the chance for you to confirm it is already too late. We've already acquired the permission, the permission for the game to restart. Of course, I've already put a bit of the disease on every participant's body. Which means that any thing beside Rock Eater, inorganic things or demon related, had already contracted the illness."

"Guu....."

This was a devastating situation. If she cursed and spread the plague, the shortest time would only be 2 days.

If it was after a month, then the weaker races would die.

They decided that they would win without fighting.

"I.....I would like to suggest something to the judge master! They are suspected of deliberately concealing the game! Please have another deliberation....."

"That won't do! Sandra-sama! Even if the game had been interrupted before they even spread the plague, the host do not have the responsibility to say it. Having another deliberation will give them another reason to force us to give them more favorable win conditions....!"

Sandra swallowed her words back down.

Pest looked at the remorseful Sandra while smiling gleefully, before giving a suggestion to the participants:

"Can I confirm that the people present here are the participant's main strength?"

"....."

"Master, I think this is a correct inference."

Answering as a representative for the participants was Weser.

"Then this is a good proposal—I say everyone, If everyone here as well as Shiroyasha joins our community [Grimm Grimoire Hamelin], we can let off the other communities!"

"What!"

"I have seen you in a new light, after all, Sandra is very cute and Jin is very smart."

"Master, the red-clothed girl I caught is quite awesome too♪"

Ratten fawned over those words, everyone from [No Name] changed their expression.

"Then we'll include that girl as well, the game can be stopped then. Since you can exchange with all the participants lives, it should be a very cheap substitution right?"

Pest smiled sweetly, cutely tilting her head.

But there was a different meaning hidden under that smile.

This girl had already previously announced, [If you don't serve me everyone will die].

This was very creepy, the child-like beautiful smile that made everyone speechless.

However Izayoi and Jin calmly analysed the situation.

".....This is a report from Shiroyasha-sama, [Grimm Grimoire Hamelin] is a newly formed community right?"

"We are not obliged to answer that."

Immediately replying back was Pest, whose reaction was extremely unnatural.

Izayoi immediately realized this point and continued chasing.

"So that's how it is, a new community, that's why the desire for excellent people is strong."

"....."

"Hey, this kind of silence will mean that you don’t deny it, is that alright, Demon Lord-sama?"

Izayoi who exposed them let out a provocative smile. Pest kept her smile and stared at Izayoi while frowning.

".....So what? This reason is not enough for us to take back what we said."

"No, it is a reason. Because you want to get us in a situation where nobody gets hurt. If we ignore the participants for one month, we will all die.....Is that right, Sandra?"

"Eh? Ah.....Yeah."

With a sudden question being imposed on herself, Sandra replied back on reflex.

Although she panickingly tried to revise her answer, Jin did not listen to her and continued to speak:

"That's right, [If we all die then you won't get any human talent] so you chose to negotiate right at this moment. Because you cannot bear with all the talented people dying after 30 days."

Jin categorically said it out. Although the reason was only limited to this, he held absolute confidence in his reasoning.

Even so, Pest responded out disapprovingly:

"I will say it once more, so what? We have the rights to decide the date for the game to restart. Even if it's not 1 month.....20 days, 20 days are only needed to kill all the participants....."

"Then we will just kill the participants who have symptoms showing."

Everyone was startled by that, turning back to look at Mandra. His eyes were indeed serious.

"No exceptions, even if it's Sandra or the [Highborn of Little Garden].....or even me will all suffer the same fate. All the comrades from Floor Master [Salamandra] will absolutely not show any weakness to any Demon Lord!"

Everyone was stunned. Even if it was a lie, this was still an overly aggressive announcement.

A virtual light bulb appeared on Izayoi's head, who picked out the next step after Mandra's speech.

"Kuro Usagi, can the rules still be changed now?"

"Eh.....Ah, YES!"

Kuro Usagi also seemed to have realised something, whose rabbit ears were on ends.

"Let's negotiate, [Black Percher]. We will agree to add in a rule of [No killing or suicidal deaths] if we begin the game 3 days later. "

"Rejected, 2 weeks."

The opposition fired back a rejection, but 2 weeks was still too long.

With all the pieces fitted together like a puzzle, the most ideal time would be one week. Izayoi let his gaze wander around to find something negotiable, at the time when his gaze met Kuro Usagi's.

"In the current game, what's your standing, Kuro Usagi?"

"Even though Kuro Usagi is the festival's participant, but as a referee I cannot participate in games within 15 days.....But if I had the host's permission then it's a different matter."

"Okay, then we will use that! Demon Lord-sama, Kuro Usagi isn't a participant so you can't recruit her during the game. But if you let Kuro Usagi be a participant then it will be a good opportunity. How about this condition?"

".....10 days, I won't push any further."

"Wait.....Wait a moment, Master ! You can't give the [Highborn of Little Garden] participant rights.....!"

"I really want that rabbit."

Pest casually replied to the anxious Ratten.

10 days, still a little bit more, just a little bit more for the situation to be 50-50. But he had already ran out of negotiable topics. When everyone started thinking with

their fastest speed —Jin seemed to have decided on something and opened his mouth:

"We agree to let this game....have a longer deadline."

"What did you say?!"

"The game will resume one week later, and the ending time .....will be [24 hours later]. Therefore, [When the game has ended, the winner privilege will go to the hosts]."

The VIP room was resounded with Sandra and Kuro Usagi's swallowing of their saliva's.

".....Are you serious? Meaning that you are already prepared to let the host side to win the game?"

"Yes. Bottom line is, to prevent any casualties, 1 week is required. Taking into account that in the near future there will be symptoms and panic, which is the limit that their mental and physical strength can hold on. And any time longer than that we will also not hold on. So all the communities will accept this unconditional loss."

"——...."

Pest placed her fingers on her lips to consider. This was indeed a useful proposal for both sides.

The participants side that want time to prepare and solve the puzzle.

The host side that wants to get good talents without harming anyone.

1 week + 1 day could be said to the most ideal timing—which was the case.

(.....I won't give up like this.)

Pest felt rather unpleasant with this. At first glance it was reasonable to conduct the negotiations, but in the end everything was going according to the participants' side. This point made her quite unhappy.

Indeed, she herself was still a new person. Although acknowledged as a Demon Lord, at the same time she was still a rookie. Not able to arbitrarily control the current status of the game, in another perspective, maybe it was a helpless ending, but the most dissatisfying thing for Pest was—

"I say, Jin. If you're able to save a life within a week.....do you think you can defeat a Demon Lord?"

"I can."

As straight as a spine(?), he reflexively answered. Because Jin did not think before answering, cold sweat could be seen on his body.

Even so, Jin believed that his comrades will inevitably be victorious.

".....Is that so, I understand."

Switching her unhappy expression, Pest smiled sweetly. And with a smile that was comparable to flowers in full bloom, she parted her lips to make the announcement:

"I hereby declare that I will definitely make YOU---be my toy."

Fierce anger emerged out of her eyes. A burst of strong dark wind swept past, with the participants having to cover their face. And the host ——[Black Percher] had disappeared without a trace, only leaving behind a black [Geass roll].

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “The Pied Piper of Hamelin”>>

List of Participant(s):

***Participants, hosts, communities currently in the Outer Gate of 3999999 and 4000000. (Including 『Highborn of Little Garden』).**

Competitors side, Host of the game：

***Spirit of the sun and white night, Star class—Shiroyasha. (Being unable to attend the fight, no contacts are made during the interruption.)**

Prohibitions on Participant side:

***Suicides or the killing of comrades.**

***Not to leave the game area during interlude (Stage area)**

***Freedom of movement during suspension period, is limited to a 500 meter radius with the festival headquarters as the center.**

Winning conditions for the host master:

***Rein or kill all participants**

***Eight days later after the time limit is over, unconditional win.**

Winning conditions for participants:

1. Kill the host master.

2. Shatter the false legend, making the true legend known.

Suspension period:

***No form of aggression between both sides for one week.**

Oath: *Respecting the described content, the community that host this Gift game based on their glory and flag.*

“Grimm Gimoire Hamelin” Seal

Interlude

Part 1

Center stage. Barang—.....The collision caused metallic sounds to echo around.

Part 2

The exhibition hall in the boundary wall was currently empty, with Pest using it as a base. After all, this place that had a variety of art exhibits could overcome the overwhelming boredom during the rest time. On the trip back to the exhibition after the deliberation, Ratten pulled down the hem of her white dress and happily asked Pest:

"Eh...Eh Master! How are we going to spend the whole of next week?"

"Not much, we have no plans."

Compared to the elated tone of Ratten, Pest had a slightly lukewarm tone of response. Her previous eloquent tone was already gone. Not wanting to say any more gossip, she quietly walked towards the huge cave entrance.

As if remembering something, Weser inquired something towards Ratten:

"Oi, Ratten, have you found the faker of [Rattenfänger]?"

"Ah~~ couldn't find it, the rats did not find anything and let the other person run away. Never mind, the person definitely participated in the game, we should wait until the 8th day to uncover the truth."

Both of them shrugged their shoulders. The three of them walked along the selection of exhibits and into the huge cave, where they widened their eyes due to the transformed site.

"Aiyah? Where is the iron doll in the center?"

Pest tilted her head in confusion, with surprised reactions coming from Ratten and Weser that far exceeded her reaction.

They rushed into the center of the cave, hurriedly looking for traces of its disappearance.

"How could it be....! The huge iron doll just suddenly disappeared!"

"No, what's important ain't that! I remember the creator of the doll was indeed—"

The community [Rattenfänger]. Using the metaphor of Grimm's child stories [Piper of Hamelin], someone who created the huge iron man without leaving any mark, suddenly disappearing without any trace.

At this time a few rats scampered towards the startled people and brought even worse news.

"Wh.....What? Even that red-clothed girl disappeared too! What exactly are you doing, you incompetent idiots!"

Informed of the disappearance of both Asuka and the iron doll, Ratten ferociously crushed a rat.

Weser spat out some instructions for Ratten:

"What are you doing, Ratten! Use the rats to search for them! They might not have gotten far!"

"I know, I know! Ahhhh, Master! I'll be going to settle those fugitives, please excuse my leave—"

"Don't care about it. It's so troublesome and I am too tired already."

Fuahh~ Pest yawned while lying on the tablecloth while preparing to sleep.

With the momentum disrupted, Ratten wondering what she should do, Pest gave her a smile that would send chills down to anyone's spine.

"Let them struggle all they like. No matter if it's an obstruction or faker — they will all be killed after 8 days."

Doesn't this solve everything? [Black Percher] leaked out a smile.

Part 3

"Asuka! Asuka....!"

The childish sound and icy droplets that slid down the cheeks.

Something small was shaking my body.

"Gu.....Guuuu,,,! Asu.....Asuka.....Asuka!"

The ground was flat underneath the body and the lukewarm soil gave out a smell.

The moist soil mercilessly snatched away my body temperature.

To gradually allow my consciousness to fade away or just being too relaxed, totally doesn't fit my style eh?

".....I am fine, so don't cry."

The pointy-hatted faerie hugged Asuka's cheeks sobbingly. She must have been very worried, for her face was full of tears.

"Luckily you are alright.....At that time I stuffed you inside my shirt on reflex, it was fortunate that my chest was not as huge as Kuro Usagi's."

Telling a self-deprecating joke, Asuka started to feel pain again. But this was what she had deserved after all that she said.

With her slowly being awake, Asuka lifted her body up and scanned her surroundings. Is this the boundary wall cave? Looking at the surroundings that clearly resembled the exhibition hall, Asuka tried to recall the situation before she lost her consciousness, before tilting her head puzzledly.

"If I remember clearly....Yeah, I was sent flying by that girl's kick!"

Asuka abruptly stood up. Thinking back at the incident, she jumped up and straightened her body, being driven by anger. Although the woman was

unforgivable, she showed her ugly side by being kicked twice, which made Asuka fuming mad.

Can I forgive her?! No! Absolutely not!

"Asu.....Asuka.....feeling good.....?"

The pointy-hatted faerie widened her small eyes, looking quite surprised.

Asuka placed the faerie on her shoulder before searching for the entrance.

This place resembled an excavated place, with light sources inserted into the wall everywhere to illuminate the area. In order to prepare for the worst, Asuka carried a torch with her before advancing along the cave. She arrived in front of a door which was the same height as the ceiling.

"There is a door here.....? And this pattern.....haven't I seen it somewhere?"

A pattern resembling a flag was carved onto the monstrous-sized wall.

In an underground area where no light could reach actually stood a gigantic metal door, in addition to that were the sophisticated carvings of the flag's pattern.

If the said flag was seen before, it must have been in the exhibition hall.

".....Asuka."

The pointy-hatted faerie called out to Asuka with a calm tone while pointing at the center of the door. A parchment was stuck onto the door.

<<GIFT GAME NAME: “Chosen one to bear the burden”>>

List of Participant(s):

***Kudou Asuka**

Clearing Condition(s):

***Make the mobile doll [Deen] crafted from [Rare Sacred Iron] to acknowledge and follow your commands.**

Defeat Condition(s):

***When participant is unable to fulfill condition for solving as stated above.**

Oath: ***Respecting the above described content, based on my glory and flag, [ ] will participant in the Gift Game.***

“Rattenfänger” Seal

"This is.....[Geass roll]? Unless..."

"Asuka."

After Asuka had finished reading the contents of the parchment, the pointy-hatted faerie jumped down from her shoulder and picked a suitable rock, before standing on it.

The childlike eyes seemed to reveal lonely, sad, but also joyous expressions. Then—

"This is the present I want to give you, hopefully you will accept it. After that please help us bring the false childhood story— [Rattenfänger] to a stop."

The sound came from all directions, not just from the eyes of the faerie, but the air inside the empty cave.

Beside her, there wasn't anybody else. Asuka thought back when the pointy-hatted faerie had appeared, before finally understanding.....

Her comrades were all here.

"[Flock of Faeries], you are related to the earth faerie right?"

"Yes, we are the souls of the 130 children that were sacrificed in Hamelin, losing our lives due to the natural disasters."

Like Ayesha from [Will-O'-Wisp], becoming a soul after losing her life to natural disasters, sometimes the soul would use skeletons as nutrients, before sublimating into new extraordinary individuals.

Originally a human, now a faerie. Experiencing [Reincarnation] as a form of birth, becoming a faerie colony by obtaining spirit power and merit.

This was the true face behind the [Colony of Faeries].

".....Are you testing me?"

"No, the meeting between you and this child was by chance, for us it is our last miracle. This matter was not deliberately intervened by us."

The immature faerie was attracted to Asuka, which was not on purpose.

The colony told Asuka that the reason why the faerie was attracted to her was due to the guidance of fate.

"The truth that happened in the year 1284, 6th month on the 24th day, as well as the true identity of the fake piper—we will tell you everything."

"We waited to create our greatest masterpiece, using the ore that Stellar Sea Dragon King bestowed to us to forge the last gift—which we present to you now."

"What was thought to be an unachievable aspiration, was changed when the 131st child brought you here."

"The one who might turn into a [Miracle-Bear Loser] was brought here. The countless years of journey, was definitely not in vain.....!"

The huge door slowly opened, with the [Geass roll] peacefully landing on Asuka's hand.

"We'll let you decide, are you willing.....to participate in our community's gift game?"

"....."

Asuka gazed at the document, there wasn't any signature of the community. Which was probably meant for her to decide if she would participate in the game.

Asuka lifted her head prosperously as she confirmed the contents of the document.

"Let me confirm something. If I get the gift that you made.....can I win against those guys?"

"As long as you have the drive...."

"As long as you make it obey...."

"As long as you are willing to bear..."

"Then it will definitely lead you to victory."

The sound of the colony echoed inside the cave. Since it was like that, there was no reason to refuse.

Nodding her head, Asuka signed the document.

"Kudou Asuka of [No Name], humbly accept your challenge."

The glowing document flew into the door, leaving a track that seemed like a signpost. Asuka picked up the pace and following it.

Going through the door, there was a dome-like center, where light was shone on it from the distant sky.

A huge red iron giant man that was over 30 feet high stood quietly in the center of the cave.

"Isn't this.....the iron doll back in the exhibition?"

The depiction on its armor used light as a fundamental idea for the abstract painting, such a indescribable luxury. It has gigantic hands that were the size of 2 humans, as well as equal width of the head and body. Just when Asuka was speechless due to the sight of the immense giant, the colony said to her:

"In the break time of 7 days, you must make it— [Deen] be willing to obey to your orders."

"This is the content of the gift game. Please use your gift [Oraculum], and light up the iron soul's life!"

At this moment, life poured into the center of the giant.

The rumbling of the giant shook the earth, it's strange monocular shining out radiant light.

Then, the red giant created the first cry that could shock the world:

"——DEEEEEEeeeEEEEEEN!"

Writhing its hollow body, the red iron giant [Deen] roared.

Even if it was infected with a disease it would not fall, the forever functioning magic being will always stand up.

In order to combat the Demon Lord, Asuka began her test.

Part 4

—Boundary wall, stage area, day break near the foot of the hills. Art exhibition, exhibition grounds. Headquarters of Demon Lord side.

It was the fourth day after the negotiations. The trio of Pest, Ratten, & Weser were always inside the huge hole that was the exhibition ground. After admiring the beautifully crafted lanterns, candle stands and stained glass, Ratten placed her favorite items in the center of the cave and appreciated them intoxicatedly.

"Ahhhhh.....so beautiful. True to the name of the Floor Master's birth festival, all the creators are particularly motivated. Especially the candle stand that was crafted by [Will-O'-Wisp]! Purposely carving out the provocative attitude of the [Blue Flame Devil]! I really want this smart craftsman to be responsible for carving out the flag of [Grimm Grimoire Hamelin]!"

"Impossible. The maker of that thing is the Jack-O'-Lantern right? Since that guy is not a participant, he would not join even if we win."

The cold tone of Weser made Ratten puff out her cheeks.

Using the advantage of the situation during the break, in the past Jack seemed to have opened a blacksmith shop before his death.

"Ah~ Ah~ How regretful~ Is there no way to let Jack be involved now?"

"Are you stupid? The method Jack used to get into the festival was the same as ours. If we rewrite it, doesn't that mean that we are disclosing the mystery out of it?"

"Although that is true.....Master, what do you think~?"

"......I hate the smell of pumpkin."

Is that the main point? Both of them let out bitter smiles because of their master's own policy.

Tidying up her black and white polka-dotted dress, Pest quietly gazed at the dragonfly that was on the candle lantern. She adopted an eloquent tone back in the deliberations, but now, unless the opposite party initiated a conversation with her, Pest will not open her mouth. Perhaps feeling worried about her master, Ratten always tried to find topics to start a conversation with Pest.

"It has already been four days, the symptoms should start showing on the infected."

"Yeah."

Pest coldly replied. Ratten, feeling quite piqued puffed out her mouth.

"Ah~ Ah~ Everything was supposed to be running smoothly, but no matter how hard I try I can't seem to find that missing iron doll and that girl. Even Master refuses to acknowledge me~ So annoying and bored~! If [Snow White] or [Cinderella] were here! Then I order them to act out an interesting and funny opera."

"……? [Snow White] and [Cinderella]?"

Pest who rarely took the initiative asked.

With her whole face lifted up, Ratten happily explained to her Master:

"They are magical book series also written by Brother Grimm, could be said to be regarded as sister grimoire as us. Anyways, they are just a bunch of noisy people, always creating a nuisance in the middle of the night thinking they are a band. For example, a dwarf who wears magic shoes and tap danced on a sizzling iron plate."

"Oh, that is quite funny. Cinderella was quite gloomy but the humour wasn't that bad."

Both of the trusted aides started laughing muzzledly.

And Pest who did not share any memories with them could only tilt her head.

".....Is [Fantasy Magic Book Group] a happy community?"

"Of course! After all, the reason why the previous owner become a Demon Lord was quite stupid!"

"He said: [I am going to be a Demon Lord, replace the lazy gods and decorate Little Garden to be much more gorgeous!].....That kind of person. At first I was very troubled about what I just signed up for .....but to be truthful, even till the last moment, he died just like the way of the Demon Lord."

Both smiles on her trusted aides disappeared.

After repeating the passage of time and recalling the past two years, their mind had already drifted off into the distance.

".....Oh, that's right, Master. There is something important we definitely must tell you."

"What?"

"You have started a gift game as the persona of a Demon Lord. From today onwards, there will be lots of communities that will target you. And the Demon Lord will keep fighting and fighting, until— they are destroyed."

"Certainly."

"....."

"Please understand that in the Little Garden, this is the fate for all Demon Lords. No matter how powerful, how evil, how arrogant.....there will be one day where they will be destroyed by the hands of an opponent. Even if the opponent is a Buddha or a Hero, it doesn't matter."

"After all, to look at it from the upper levels, it is simply a boundless thing. The upper levels of Little Garden are the domains of the Shura gods, and the goal of

Demon Lords is to continue rising to the upper levels or they will be unable to survive. In order to make ourselves survive, we will have to pay the price of being destroyed by those guided by fate.....uh, these are all theories learned from our previous Master."

Leaning on the iron fence in front of the exhibits, Weser playfully shrugged his shoulders.

"......Both of you really like the previous Master eh."

"Well because he was a good man, even his base was created with just a 'Pa!', Gently hitting the ground and a castle that can't even lose to Schloss Neuschwanstein appears. That's how much of a powerful person—"

The explaining Ratten animatedly stopped.

Seeing Pest turning her face away, Ratten, feeling somewhat surprised probed her face to look at Pest.

Only looking at Pest pouting her lovely cheeks.

".....Master? What happened? It's so hard to see you have such a cute reaction."

"You are like always making me mad Ratten."

After the severe scolding, Pest sat down on a bench in the exhibition, firmly shaking her leg. Ratten was not a fool, although she didn't know the reason why Pest was angry, she was quite happy now.

"Don't be like that Master~♪ Now we only love the lovely you only~!"

"That's right, the Demon Lord to shoulder Grimm Grimoire name is only you and no one else.....Therefore we will dedicate to you till the last, this I can guarantee."

Having a contract, even if the road will be doomed, the loyalty will always be there till the end.

[Black Percher] slightly shook the dragonfly, quietly feeling the meaning of that sentence.

Part 5

— Boundary wall, stage area. Operation headquarters of the festival, quarantine room.

In the room filled with peaceful air, Kasukabe Yō woke up.

Because of the fever, her movements were as sluggish as a layer of fog, plus her consciousness was still not quite clear.

Due to the uncomfortable position of sleeping, Kasukabe flipped her body. Now she was sure that besides her, there was also—

"……Izayoi?"

"Oh? You are awake. How are you feeling?"

Izayoi turned his head around, it looks like he was reading a book whilst sitting beside Kasukabe.

Although Kasukabe did not know what was written in the book, it probably contained data of reference for solving this game.

6 days have passed since the negotiations. Out of the members in [No Name], only Kasukabe was infected with the Black Death, who was currently being locked up in the quarantine room, taking separate action from Kuro Usagi and the rest.

Looking at Izayoi ignoring the fact that this was a quarantined room and slipping into the room leisurely, Kasukabe could only ask dumbfoundedly:

"Have you found the trail for solving this game?"

"Un……We generally know it, but have not yet dug out the core."

Flipping to a new page, Izayoi replied while shrugging his shoulders.

The game will begin tomorrow evening, but the opinions of the participant side have not yet been conformed.

Morale was terribly low due to the never-ending scenario of comrades being isolated one by one. It was because of Sandra's arrangements that Kasukabe had gotten a room, while the others had to be squeezed together outside.

Currently the biggest problem was the condition to win for the participant side: [Shatter the False Legend, Making the True Legend Known]. There wasn't any solid answer for this statement yet, which also contributes to why the opinions had yet to be conformed.

"Although the investigation has roughly ended, there were too many differences during the explanation, which is the current feeling right now."

"......Specifically?"

"Here." Izayoi passed a piece of paper to Kasukabe, on it was a memo written by him regarding the investigations.

Ratten= German for mouse. Demon incarnate that can manipulate both rats and humans.

Weser= Flooding disaster of land and river. Demon incarnate that can control natural phenomena like landslides.

Sturm= German for storm. Demon Incarnate related to storms and other atmosphere.

Pest= Speculation was that the spotted clown could manipulate the cause of infection "Rat". Demon incarnate of black death.

[False legend], [True legend] probably means for the above-mentioned demons, the real story that happened in Hamelin on Year 1284, June 26th.

"......? Even though you all understand that much, and yet?"

"Yeah, although we have understood that much, but...."

Izayoi halted on his words and seemed to think about how he should explain, while continuing to reply intermittently:

"Do you remember when Kuro Usagi had summoned us, she talked about the [Parallel world intersection theory]?"

"Un, I remember."

"That seemed to be one of the ways to summon people into the Little Garden, a method called [Multi-manifold assembly type]. In short—[Even if the timeline of the parallel phenomenon that occurred is not similar, eventually the results will be that it will converge at the same point].....Is that more understandable?"

"Un. meaning to say, that there are a few ways for the timeline to reach the intersection [Absolute a] of formula Ω(Killing method) right?"

Oh? Izayoi slightly tilted his head.

"Yeah.....Main point is indeed that. What it is, your explanation is tons of time better than Kuro Usagi's. I should use your method to explain to Ojou-sama then."

"Is that so, after that?"

"In other words, Forumla Ω（Killing method=‖ Formula w（Weser）= Formula Ｘ（Ratten）= Formula ｙ（Sturm）= Formula ｚ（Pest）= Absolute α. This formula seems to equal the demons having more spirit power than average. And I guess that, Among = unable to set up textual criticism.....is either the [True Legend] or [False Legend]."

The legend of [Piper of Hamelin] doesn't have any specific truth.

However they could discuss which was potentially the strongest most textual criticism.

But they were still unable to prove that the textual criticism was the truth. At least it was Izayoi who did not know what was the truth.

Coughing a few times, Kasukabe sat up because of the uncomfortable feeling in her body due to the fever and asked a question:

"Then, let's not discuss the truth behind it first. Who do you think is the fake?"

"Formula z (Pest)."

Izayoi answered immediately. His expression clearly indicated that he was confident about his conclusion.

"Spirited away, storms, natural disaster.....It was clear that that the methods were all immediate death, except for Black death which was a chronic disease. However, the story of [Piper of Hamelin] must happen on the year 1284 on the 26th, where [The time was limited, to let the 130 children be sacrificed]."

—Year 1284, John and Paul diary 26th of June. 130 children born in Hamelin were seduced by a piper, dressed in all kinds of colors, the children were all lost at the place of execution near the hills.—

From the onset, the period for Black Death would be 2 to 5 days. Unless all the children showed the same symptoms and died at the same time, it would not meet the inscription of the [Piper of Hamelin].

".....? Since [Black Percher] is the false legend of Hamelin, then if we beat her down won't it be.....?"

"I have also considered that point. But then it would repeat the first winning condition."

There were 2 winning conditions. Beat down the Hamelin's Demon Lord, and that sentence. Although that identified sentence was as easy as throwing a large smoke bomb, it was still too dangerous.

"Even though I have read about the book related to Black Death.....but nothing seemed to have prompted any pathogenic aspects."

Izayoi tossed the book at the wall. His face seemed to carry a near solving yet haven't solved it expression, which seemed to upset him.

"I've investigated some meaning behind the sentence [Shatter the false legend, making the true legend known]. I can speculate that both have the same shape, and it is an item that can be [Shattered] and [Made]. Then, the only possible item is, the display of the Hamelin inscription of the piper [Stained Glass]."

Kasukabe stared at Izayoi with widened eyes.

"Stained glass.....So the method they used to sneak into the festival was....."

"That's right, the game this time, as non-participants are also not the host, they could still use some other place to enter into the festival."

— [People who have Host Master's rights, must identify themselves before becoming participants.]

— [Participants are not allowed to use Host Master's rights].

— [People other than participants are not allowed to invade into the festival area.]

With all these incompatible and contradicting rules, using an individual quota to participate was—

"—[Art crafts exhibits]. I think the Grimoire 《Piper of Hamelin》's real face is likely the combination of the complex glass objects. And these guys used the grimoire to invade into the festival."

Jack was one example. As a gift, he also participated in the festival as a individual.

After informing Sandra about it, they then knew that besides Izayoi and company, there were 100 other pieces of stained glass that were sent from a [No Name] for a community participant.

Seeing Izayoi throwing out speculations one by one, Kasukabe looked at him both admirably and surprisingly.

"Izayoi.....What exactly is inside your head?"

"Hmm? Want to see?"

"Yes, want to see."

"How could I let you see!"

Wahahahaha! Izayoi laughed loudly.

".....Well that's all for now. Yeah, to be honest I really don't know what to do. I am guessing that we should shatter the displayed fake stained glass, establishing the genuine.....but the criterion is still not clear, that should we break other stained glass beside the one that establishes Pest. After all, there are 100 or more of them. Finally we can only be fatalistic, and think of ways to beat down the Demon Lord in tomorrow's game."

Gazing at the sky, Izayoi let out a bitter smile. The time between now and the start of the game was probably less than 20 hours.

It was almost soon before Sandra's policy of all communities to stay united till the deadline takes place.

"『True art exists in the universe in your heart』 Eh.....Aiyah Aiyah, this sentence is indeed quite meaningful. Imagine if the inscription of Hamelin has a similar side. Comparing all kinds of textual and speculation that can stimulate one's imagination, creating a story similar to Brother Grimm eh.....But what we need now is the real one, Shiroyasha."

Recalling the conversation before couldn't help but make Izayoi laugh.

Looking at Izayoi who was somewhat abandoning himself to despair, Kasukabe smiled gently.

".....Eh, Kasukabe. What kind of smile am I giving when cornered?"

"Sorry, I am just thinking that it was rare for you to have fallen out. You were always confident and arrogant yet self-centered, causing trouble to everyone, so to be honest it's quite refreshing to see you like this."

"Since you could see so much truth in one breath, you must have huge courage.....heh, And to think that I was worried that you might feel lonely in this room, what an idiot am I?"

Eh? Kasukabe stared at Izayoi.

"I heard that with all kinds of diseases, not only is there physical discomfort but even the heart will be affected. I thought that you might be lonely after getting struck by that disease, so I came to see how you were, to think I would be the topic of such hurtful words."

Picking up the book he had thrown, Izayoi sat down hard. Feeling somewhat sorry, Kasukabe scratched her head.

"......I am so sorry, I didn't know that you were kinder than what I thought."

"Un, you can replace my kindness by crying hard!"

"I take back my words."

Wahaha! Izayoi laughed as a response, making Kasukabe feel somewhat frustrated.

"No matter what, the winner will be decided tomorrow. You look like you are unable to participate right? So I feel that you should at least know what is happening.....since in the worst case I will take down the Demon Lord's head myself."

"Got it. Oh yeah, how is Shiroyasha?"

"She is still sealed on the balcony, with no contact. In the end we still could not make sense of her war participation conditions."

"Really.....but, how did the people manage to seal her? Is there anything written on the Hamelin's inscription that could seal Shiroyasha?"

"How is that possible. To say it first, Shiroyasha is affiliated with the Buddhist side. And Shiroyasha doesn't meet the strict definition of a female demon. I heard that she sealed the original strength of the White night Star-spirit class, then converting to Buddhism to lower her own spirit power."

"......Original strength?"

Kasukabe coughed while tilting her head.

"Yeah, It was said that Shiroyasha has the sun authority in the Little Garden. Including the properties of the sun itself, while also carrying the responsibilities of the moving of the sun—"

—Eh? Talking to her, it seemed to evoke some memories of Izayoi about the past.

(.....Moving of the sun.....?)

Where have I seen that sentence before? Izayoi crooked his head while thinking.

And it was not just the memories, but it was also regarding this matter. Izayoi reflexively picked up the book and started speed reading, reviewing all the relevant knowledge about Black Death.

—So called [Black Death], rampant after the mini ice age at the 14th century, one of human history's most serious plague. Causing humans to have sepsis, before dying after black spots appeared.

In Brother Grimm's story 《Piper of Hamelin》, there was a clown who wore a spotted costume.

And the clown could manipulate the main source of infection that cause the pandemic of Black Death, rat.

According to the two above points, there were speculations that [The one hundred and thirty children died due to Black Death].

(.....14th century and mini ice age?)

Izayoi did not notice the incubation period nor the symptoms, but the era during the Black Death.

The time written on the inscription of Hamelin was the year 1284.

In other words, the heyday of Black Death and the inscription of Hamelin— The time backgrounds did not match.

(Unless.....Pest was a different period demon not related to the inscription of Hamelin .....?)

Why didn't he notice it before? From the start Pest had already stated that she was not Hamelin's Demon Lord. In other words she had the attributes of the Black Death but was not related to Hamelin in any way.

Excitedly flipping his book, Izayoi started recording everything in his brain.

"The cause of Black Death and the mini ice age.....It was because [The sun entered an ice age period], resulting in the world being cooler! Really! So this is the truth behind the seal on Shiroyasha!"

The cheekily smiling Izayoi shouted out.

The reason why Shiroyasha was sealed, was because the solar activity was at a minimum — Which was because this game rule was to trick people into repeating the chronicle when the sun was weakened.

Izayoi tightly held the book about Black Death, having understood the meaning of [Shatter the false legend].

"So, those guys aren't the Hamelin of year 1284.....Ah damn it! I have been fooled! [Black Percher]! Although they are the Brother Grimm story of 『Piper of Hamelin』, they are not the real 『Piper of Hamelin』.....!"

Pong! Izayoi forcefully pushed open the door and rushed out.

Before leaving, he turned over and said to Kasukabe:

"Good job Kasukabe! Thanks to you, I solved it! Leave the rest to me and rest peacefully."

"Is that so? Then good luck."

The non-stop coughing of Kasukabe sent Izayoi off. Although she did not understand what was happening, but Izayoi probably has done it. She left the remaining situation to the others and got back into the bed.

The nestled Calico cat asked Kasukabe after hearing everything:

"That kid .....Do you think he is alright, Ojou?"

"Definitely no problem. Although he does look like that, he still cares for his comrades. Oh yeah, are you okay staying with me? Who knows if I might infect you."

"Don't have to worry about me, Ojou. For the 14 years of my life, this old head has always been with Ojou, Even if I pass away on Ojou's arms, it would not be such a bad ending."

Meowing, Calico cat went onto Kasukabe's arms. Being tortured by the heat from the fever, Kasukabe stretched out her arms and hugged Calico cat, before her vision started to become blurry.

In her final moments of consciousness, Kasukabe still remembered a friend that was currently missing.

(Asuka.....I hope that you are safe.)

In order to protect her, Asuka was held captive by the enemy.

Feeling condemned by her inner guilt, Kasukabe firmly held the necklace inherited from her father.

After praying for the safety of Asuka, Kasukabe fell into a deep slumber.

Part 6

—24 hours later.

All the communities who still had vitality gathered near the operation headquarters of the Birth of the Fire Dragon festival.

Preparing for the final battle against [Black Percher].

Chapter 8

Part 1

—Boundary wall, stage area. Operation headquarters of festival, hall.

The cloister at the stage area was dyed in red by the sunset, where not even a silhouette was present.

The corridor with red glass was also deserted, making the lively scene one week ago look like an illusion.

The shadow cast by the steeple was slanted, and the palace gradually became darker. The total number of people gathered in the hall numbered just about five hundred or so.

Those that were forced to yield one week ago and others who did not have participation rights like Jack, adding to the fact that the people gathered in the participants didn't get the disease from the Demon Lord, there was only less than 1 percent of the full strength.

Sandra appeared in front of the commotion, as if trying to dispel everyone's anxiety, spoke in a resolute tone:

"The plan for the game has already been decided. Those that can still move are responsible for important tasks, everyone please quiet down and listen.....Mandra-niisama, please."

Mandra, who stood at the side, tidied his uniform before reading the plans that were written out on a document.

"Firstly, fighting with the 3 demons is the responsibility of [Salamandra] and [No Name] led by Jin Russel.

Secondly, the other members are placed in charge of finding the 130 stained glass.

Lastly, after the discovery of the glass, please ask the Commander for instructions to either protect or break it, according to the rules."

"Thank you— these are the plans for the participant side. This is our final battle with the Demon Lord, please be vigilant and concentrate on your tasks."

WOAHHH! Warm roars resounded in the hall. Although the game was about to begin, the objectives to solve the game has already been completed, thus improving morale.

Members who had gotten the disease also roared, but this was not the time to show weakness.

In order to win the game against the Demon Lord, the participants began to move.

On the other hand, Kuro Usagi was standing on top of the palace overlooking the stage area.

The symbolic city could be seen and debris of the huge chandelier was all over the roof, not yet cleaned up. Placing both hands on her chest, Kuro Usagi quietly gazed over the base of the steeple.

Her hands were trembling slightly.

".....Guu!"

"What's wrong, Kuro Usagi?"

Kyahh! Kuro Usagi let out a sudden voice, with her ears and tail springing outwards. When she noticed the thing on her chest, she was shocked again.

It appears that when Kuro Usagi was not being attentive, Izayoi had slipped through her armpits and moved her chest.

"Wuh....What are you doing, you idiot!"

"Of course I am rubbing your chest, Kuro Usagi-chan."

The magic hands that could pounce and the hurriedly escaping Kuro Usagi.

"Rea.....Really! Kuro Usagi thinks that Izayoi-san's interest is really improper!"

"Heh! What are you saying? In the past there was [Rather than being a sneaky mensao pervert, why don't stand up proudly as an open gentleman!] this motto...."

"There isn't!"

"There is!"

"Definitely not!"

Yiiii~! Kuro Usagi, with her rabbit ears on end, strongly rebutted.

Izayoi laughed with a Wahaha, before sitting down on the roof and asking:

"So, why is your face filled with expressions of distress?"

Eh? Facing Izayoi's sudden question, Kuro Usagi was momentarily speechless.

Feeling very ashamed after being seen, Kuro Usagi turned her face, already with slightly flushed rabbit ears.

"It's.....it's nothing! Kuro Usagi is just excited because the game is gonna start."

"Oh? I think it's because you are facing against humanity's first huge stage that you are trembling from nervousness."

Izayoi gave a sly smile and corrected her, making Kuro Usagi close her mouth.

Because of [trial jurisdiction], the [Highborn of Little Garden] eligibility to participate in gift games is usually restricted. Unless it was a particularly rare opportunity, it was practically impossible to participate in gift games.

Although Izayoi's accusations pierced through her red heart.....but this was not the reason why Kuro Usagi felt so melancholic.

"To say.....to say I am not worried is just a lie, but we [Moon Rabbits] are the dependents of Indra. Once we join the fight, the blood from our bodies will naturally adapt to suit the fighting."

"Oh? So you are trembling because of something else?"

Izayoi was saying it in a relaxed tone but Kuro Usagi's face was very stiff.

Lowering her rabbit ears and eyes, Kuro Usagi used an attitude as if she had reached a dead end to confess her inner thoughts.

"To be honest, Kuro Usagi is thinking about something related to the community.....and the captive Asuka-san."

"What?"

"If we lose in this game, it essentially means that [No Name] would completely collapse, leaving only the children to stay in the base. Just thinking about leaving all the kids alone.....Kuro Usagi will.....will not be able to control her anxiety."

Kuro Usagi clenched her lips, even her rabbit ears drooped.

"However, this is a reality that will just make people give up. Mother bird gets attacked by Demon Lord, then the chicks will perish. In the Little Garden, this situation isn't rare at all.....and Asuka-san and Kasukabe-san, makes Kuro Usagi even more sorry."

The tolerant tone sounding Kuro Usagi stared into the distance and asked:

"Izayoi-kun, do you remember the advice Shiroyasha-sama gave?"

"Advice?"

"Which was the words that she told to Asuka-san and Kasukabe-san, [Before fighting against a Demon Lord, increase your strength. The two of you with your current abilities will definitely not survive in a Demon Lord game.]"

Saying till the end, Kuro Usagi's tone naturally began to tremble.

A month has passed since the three of them came into the Little Garden. Before coming to the [Birth of the Fire Dragon festival], Kuro Usagi had never taken the advice seriously, only introducing the community life and gift games to everyone.

Even if they had the highest level of talent, they would not be able to enhance their strength when in this kind of gift game.

In order to one day take back the community's name, flag, and companions, all three of them were willing to provide assistance.

Not making any difficult request, and immediately agreeing to help while putting on a smile, was the limit of their kindness, but it has always been trampled till now.

"Up till now Kuro Usagi had not taken that advice. My eyes were always mystified by the endless possibilities of everyone.....In a month, everyone gave [No Name] so much kindness, having a dramatic shift in our lifestyle. We are no longer troubled by the lack of water, and the burden of getting food has lessened as well. Now no one would carry apologetic looks of children complaining about starvation."

"....."

"At the time when you all took down the former Demon Lord Algol, bringing back Leticia-sama.....Kuro Usagi really thought that a broad road had appeared in front of us. Originally, we did not see any hope for the future, only desperately trying to maintain the status quo of our community.....But then Kuro Usagi had a bad premonition, feeling that everything was for better or for worse."

Kuro Usagi gazed at the distant sunset, confessing everything from her heart.

That's right, companions that were taken away were replaced. Although it was a small step, it was still true progress.

The stagnant community from three years ago has finally started to flow again.

Seeing hope, the developments that were heading to the right direction, then continue on to moving forward.....Was what Kuro Usagi thought.

".....When we advocated that we were going to [Beat down the Demon Lords], Kuro Usagi thought that everyone was reliable and was deeply moved. However, because of this! We should establish a long-term perspective plan! And it should have lots of things, only Kuro Usagi who was born in this Buddha gathered Little Garden can tell everyone! It should be like this, but when you all confronted the Demon Lord before, Kuro Usagi did not form up any plan, simply enjoying my peaceful life, and the result is.....!"

Asuka was captured, Kasukabe was infected.

Feeling that she was a good for nothing, Kuro Usagi suddenly felt like crying. Facing against the words [Kuro Usagi lies in the heart of the community] said before, it was not regarded as an excessive criticism when she said that she had trampled the intentions of those three.

".....Three people from separate and different directions that have outstanding talents, this point Kuro Usagi could guarantee as the dependent of Indra. But these strengths belonged to each individual.....not something that the community can monopolize. At the end of the day, Kuro Usagi is just relying on the good will of everyone."

This was indeed the case, they were all very kind-hearted. Kuro Usagi softly said.

Saying that it gives them self-satisfaction by helping others, saying that they were helping because it was interesting.

Even though it was some self-centered reasons.....however in fact, they all definitely did not have a mistaken definition of justice.

Making Kuro Usagi feel even more sorry for Asuka and the rest.

Raising her head, with her rabbit ears being straight, Kuro Usagi faced Izayoi.

".....Izayoi-san, Kuro Usagi has a request for you, would you listen?"

"It's not a problem if it's just listening.....so?"

"Could you let Kuro Usagi be the Demon Lord's opponent?"

Kuro Usagi in a serious attitude, yet suppressing the hidden anger in her, bowed towards Izayoi.

"Kuro Usagi knows that Izayoi-san has been looking forward to a Demon Lord game for a long time. But no matter what.....Kuro Usagi wants vengeance against the Demon Lord, or Kuro Usagi will not be content."

Because of her fighting spirit, Kuro Usagi's hair starts to fluctuate.

Her black hair quickly was enveloped by a reddish light, her whole body gave out a strong grudge kind of aura as expected from a dependant of a War god.

Izayoi who looked at Kuro Usagi behaving this way— laughed with a heh.

"Do you have a chance of winning?"

"Yes. No, the current saying is, Kuro Usagi will use the most effective gifts against the Demon Lord. Even if I die, Kuro Usagi will certainly take the head off the Demon Lord."

"In that case then, the words are dismissed."

Izayoi immediately made a decision.

Pointing his fingers at the panicking yet wanting to refute Kuro Usagi, Izayoi couldn't help but let out a smile.

"Kuro Usagi, you are too pessimistic. This situation is not as bad as you think, have you forgotten the enemy's motive? 『To get as many good people as possible』— this is their overture. With that being the case, those guys will aim for the time to end, using a negative and time consuming tactic.....Which will be their flaw."

As it dawned on Kuro Usagi, she suddenly gasped.

"Those guys have to protect the stained glass while not being beaten down themselves. However, a defensive action needs manpower, naturally the only option is for them to do it."

"We have to take the opportunity to break them up.....right?"

"Haha. That's right! Added points for that intelligence! Kuro Usagi!"

Izayoi laughed and pulled Kuro Usagi's ears towards himself.

"Firstly, you and Sandra will block off [Black Percher]. During this period, Leticia and I will defeat Weser and Ratten. Then when the main force gathers, use your trump card to give her a final blow— which should be the most appropriate way to win it."

Facing against the specific details of the operation from Izayoi, Kuro Usagi blinked admirably while feeling very surprised.

"In.....Indeed, this is a strategy to win. But Izayoi-san.....is this really okay?"

"It's not that bad, since there will be other chances to fight with the Demon Lord, I'll give you a freebie this time. Let me appreciate the power of the dependent of Indra."

Izayoi grinned while Kuro Usagi gave back a strong response:

"Kuro Usagi understands, then please watch carefully, under the guidance of Indra, the power of the [Moon Rabbit]."

Part 2

Arriving to the start of the game, the host side started their ongoing re-work.

Ratten, who wore thin white fabric clothes, let the rats collect information.

"Master master, looks like they have found the answer~!"

Weser, who was dressed in military uniform, unhappily scratched his short black hair and complained:

"Puuu! I thought that the last puzzle wouldn't be solved until just before the time runs out."

Pest, who wore a spotted pattern dress, stood up, both hands clasped behind her back.

"......Doesn't matter, worst case is that we just have to kill everyone."

She remained in this relaxed attitude, turning her head to look back at Weser and Ratten.

"I want to launch the grimoire of Hamelin. Since the puzzle has been solved, there is no need to hold back."

Pest's ferocious speech brought the two cheekily smiling people to their feet.

"La la la~ It's time for the climax eh, Master♪"

"Hey, don't be imprudent, Ratten, they still have the [Highborn of Little Garden]"

Seeing Weser being so serious, Ratten raised an eyebrow and looked at Weser.

".....Are [Moon Rabbits] that strong?"

"Yeah, I have seen a Moon Rabbit fight before, something that is incomparable to common deities. They are the dependents of the strongest species. The gifts bestowed upon them are of a different level. If it is you or me, we will definitely not be able to neutralize her."

Weser and Ratten could only discuss this by whispering, while carrying bitter expressions.

Pest let out a smile while looking at them.

"Really, then besides the Grimoire, we will have another plan then."

"Plan?"

Leisurely walking towards Weser, Pest stretched her beautiful fingers and pressed on his forehead.

"Weser, I am going to give you divinity. When the game starts, let them taste the terror of a Demon Lord."

Part 3

When the signal for the start of the game rang, several earthquakes occurred at once.

The palace surrounded by the boundary wall was engulfed in light, while strong rays covered the participant area.

Looking up, the sky of the boundary wall disappeared without a trace.

Instead, what replaced it was an unfamiliar street.

"What.....What is this place?"

Surprised shouts came from the participants.

Ahead of them, the large domed minaret had a dramatic change, before turning into a wooden building.

The chandeliers that created dusk colored light disappeared, while pink colored buildings were reconstructed in the surrounding area.

The base of the boundary wall had completely changed into a different town.

Jin who was in charge of searching for the stained glass paled and shouted:

"Unless, this is the power of the Hamelin grimoire.....That means this is Hamelin city."

"What!"

Mandra exclaimed when he heard what Jin had shouted. Chaos was spreading at this time because of the change, and the high morale soldiers that became baffled stopped in their tracks.

"What.....What is this?"

"And what was that song just now."

"Is it a trap set by the Demon Lord?"

As the shaking gradually spread, Mandra clicked his tongue and forcefully shouted:

"Do not panic! Everyone will split up and retrieve the stained glass."

"But.....But Mandra-sama! We do not have geographical advantages now, so we don't even know where the stained glass are....."

"Be calm! We have someone in charge!"

Mandra tightly grabbed onto Jin 's shoulders.

Jin astonishingly looked up at Mandra, who then secretly said to him:

"The range of your intelligence is enough, quickly explain to everyone about the situation."

"But.....But....I am not that clear about it....."

"So I said as long as it is in your range of intelligence! Everyone will believe what you say! So quickly act or else the 24 hours will be over in a flash."

These words made Jin swallow back the words he was going to use to refute. His eyes wandered around to look for Izayoi, who should have a clear geographical visual of the town of Hamelin.

However, he still could not find it. Since the game has a time limit, every second is needed to fight against the Demon Lord.

Making up his mind, Jin came to the front of the search teams.

"First.....Firstly.....Please find the church! If the setting for this game is Hamelin, the stained glass should be hidden at relevant places! As for the identification of 『False Legend』 and 『True Legend』, please find the stained glass and follow my instructions."

Under Jin's orders, the search team started mobilizing.

Immediately, a song that shook the whole place started resonating throughout the city.

Part 4

Having left the group to move around individually, Izayoi was jumping on top of roofs of Hamlin city to look for his prey. Realising that the floor underneath his foot started shaking due to the song, Izayoi smiled in euphoria.

"Oh....? I thought it was a precision kind of Demon, to think that he could change the crust, really makes people expectant. Didn't think that he had that much strength. And the architecture of this city....ha, so that's how it is, if the Gothic city contained Renaissance architecture, then the pre-arranged strategy would have been seen through."

Climbing to the top of the tallest building, Izayoi looked around.

The sunset dyed Hamelin in orange, while the terrain contradicts what knowledge Izayoi had. Probably referencing Izayoi with another different timeline.

However, the city that was based on the legend was particularly sophisticated.

"Although the structures are quite a mess...but that should be the church, and Burgundy Rawson Street right? So attention should be focused on that place? Okay, it's time for me to go——"

"——Before that, let's have a duel, Brat!"

After that explosive sound, the building Izayoi was stepping on started to burst open.

Even the foundations that held the building together were smashed, the wooden building completely disappeared, leaving no traces.

After he heard the voice, Izayoi reflexively jumped towards the sky to try and dodge, but the pursuing Weser leaped from behind and grabbed onto Izayoi's face.

"You.....!"

"This is payback! It's my turn to start things!"

Swinging the huge flute, Weser slammed it hard on Izayoi's abdomen.

This strength of the strike was totally on a different level than last time, with shockwaves spreading on Izayoi's body, he was flung to the river, where he bounced on the surface a few times before landing hardly on the shore.

'Puu!' Izayoi spat out blood and wiped his blood, before standing up and staring at Weser.

".....So you had something up your sleeve, that was quite effective."

"Of course. Don't think you can take me as lightly as before, brat, this is the first time I've gotten divinity since I was summoned. If it ended too easily, it will be too disappointing."

What? Izayoi stared at Weser in surprise.

Laughing with a 'KaKa', Weser forcefully swung his flute sideways.

Followed by that was the ground shaking.

"Yup, that's right, this is strength earned by demons who have [Divinity].....! KaKa! This is very exaggerative eh, brat! The one hundred and thirty deaths could bring power, but it can't even be compared to this! The me of now can even be compared to the planetary crust!"

Once again Weser swung his flute. It was said that the shift in the planetary crust could bring about airflow, cleaving away Weser's flood, the river then flowed upwards, drowning the buildings by the riverside.

This unmatched strength, and the snake deity Izayoi had fought in the past could be said to be very different. Comparing the [Divinity] received by a snake and [Divinity] received by a Demon, there was an overwhelming gap between both sides.

Noticing the abrupt increase in strength, Izayoi exposed an arrogant smile.

"......Ha! What is this! I wanted to enjoy it a little bit more, and in the end you changed to match my preferences! Makes me really happy, right? The real [Pied Piper of Hamelin]."

The real [Pied Piper of Hamelin].

Being pointed out, Weser smiled in response.

"So the one who solved the puzzle was indeed you, brat."

"Yup. But I won't lie that I was tricked until the last moment. I know for a fact that everyone else aside from you are counterfeits, modeled after the Black Death, becoming the [Hamelin's legend after the year 1500]."

Bringing himself up to his feet, Izayoi announced the answer to the puzzle.

—Year 1284, John and Paul diary 26th of June. 130 children born in Hamelin were seduced by a piper, dressed in all kinds of colors , the children were all lost at the place of execution near the hills.—

The inscription about the legend, [Did not have a joker that could manipulate rats]. After the peak period of the Black Death in the 14th century, the legend about the pied piper of Hamelin started to surface about rats and a Joker who could manipulate them.

"The Grimoire written by Brothers Grimm portrayed a [Different kind of fairy tale's demon]. Which was the one called [Rattenfänger] which was a counterfeit. And also about this town's architectural style.....it should be called [Renaissance of Weser] buildings right? And these pink colored buildings only appeared after the late 15th century. The reason why you did not launch the Hamelin grimoire at the start, was because you do not want to be locked out of the year right? If the Gothic style architecture changed into a Renaissance-style kind of city, then it would be more evident."

Weser could only shrug in response to Izayoi's questioning.

"Thus, we can conclude that the black death and rat manipulator are fake. After all, the theory behind why black death appeared was, because of the black spots and infected rats."

"....."

"Although [Sturm] looks like the real deal, it is only just a cover up. The inscription was written with [Disappeared near the hills] and [Hill] refers to the hills adjacent to the Weser River, also a metaphor where the children died in the disaster. In other words Storm also points to Weser river. That huge soldier is nurtured by you guys, a monster unrelated to the legend of Hamelin — Based on the above reasoning, only Weser is in line with the original inscription of the pied piper of Hamelin."

Izayoi pointed at Weser.

"And then there is the Grimoire of Hamelin. Before being summoned into Little Garden, this gift can intersect a timeline from the year 1284 to the year 1500 of the [Pied Piper of Hamelin], therefore the summon occurred. Let me see..... If the summoning Grimoire would be destroyed.....What would happen? I think the seal on Shiroyasha will disappear and, you all will vanish right?"

Weser only listened quietly to Izayoi's speculations.

Treating the silence as acquiescence, Izayoi started to conclude.

"In regards to the background of the legend of the piper and chronicle produce of Black Death, I originally thought that they were more theories.....but since you acquired divinity, it makes a likely candidate answer stand out."

With excitement and cold sweat trickling down his spine, Izayoi unveiled the truth behind the Demon Lord.

"The joker and the source of infection that was the rats in the legend of the pied piper of Hamelin, both of them had the same nickname. This nickname brings about death. In other words.....[Death]."

—God [Black Percher].

Izayoi speculated that this is the true gift name of the Demon Lord.

Hearing all his theories, as if treating Izayoi as some sort of rare animal, carefully watching him.

"Aiii.....Hey, brat."

"What? If there are mistakes feel free to correct them."

"No, there is none. What should I say....Is that, I still think you should switch over to our side? You will definitely develop more on the Demon Lord side."

Facing this sincere face of poaching, Izayoi rejected after laughing out loudly.

"Sorry, but I reject. Although the Demon Lord looks interesting, but I have other motives."

"Oh? But you also don't look like the kind of easy opponents that will stall for time."

Talking about here, Weser suddenly released out an astonishing vindictiveness.

"Last resort, go and die! Brat!"

"That was my line! Low class demon!"

The impact of the roar created from the blows not only affected Hamelin, but even the land around them started to vibrate.

Izayoi twist past the flute that could manipulate strong vibrations, and went for a close kick. Due to his bad posture, Weser could narrowly avoid Izayoi's attacks.

This time Izayoi turned his body, avoiding all of Weser's downwards wave of attacks produced like a song, crushing everything.

"Heh! I am not just only strong! Kid!"

A huge air tearing sound came from the magic flute.

In response to the sound, the earth and river destroyed Izayoi's foothold, at the same time erupting upwards. Izayoi who was high up in the air kept his face that was full of boredom, before happily staring at Weser.

"Very good, very good.....! The climax is here!"

With Izayoi's free falling, Weser sat back and waited at the bottom.

Facing the strength that could change crustal movements, Izayoi only relied on his fist to tackle.

Engage.

Part 5

The divided search teams were all looking for the stained glass in Hamelin city.

A team that went to search inside a building exclaimed out loudly:

"Found it! The stained glass with the rat manipulator!"

"That is the [False legend]! Shatter it!" The sound of shattering glass could be heard after Jin replied. Confirming the rat patterns on the road, he surveyed the surrounding buildings.

"Yes.....This is Burgundy Rawson Street! The place where the 130 children were abducted!"

Jin looked downwards on the floor. The whole road was painted with red rat patterns. While following the pattern, he was also using a map, locating the stained glass that would shine.

(The differences in distance between where the stained glass were displayed in the stage area and in Hamelin city are not quite far apart. In other words, we weren't swallowed by the city, but it was Hamelin that was summoned to Little Garden—?)

"Okay~ That will be all♪"

On instinct, everyone turned to look up at the building next to the road.

Standing on the roof, was the demon of spirited away that manipulated rats, Ratten.

"You were that time.....! What did you do to Asuka-sama!" Jin yelled, but Ratten just ignored his presence while laughing.

After she mimicked a salute, Ratten lifted up her magic flute.

"Welcome to Burgundy Rawson Street! This was once famous for the spirited away! The next step is to allow everyone to experience the wonderful internecine♪"

The next moment, a dozen fire salamanders appeared on the roof. They were all comrades of [Salamandra].

The search teams immediately went into combative action, but were stopped by the livid face of Jin.

"No.....No can do! If the participants are fighting each other....."

"There is no time to worry that much! Since they are being controlled under that Demon Lord, only we can stop them! This is called being dependent on each other!"

"It's not that kind of reason! Has everyone not read the amended rules! If you attack your comrades, even you will be disqualified."

Members of [Salamandra] suddenly recalled that. If the already small number of participants attack and get disqualified, even the search team may be influenced by it too.

Looking at the picturesque scene, Ratten smiled happily.

"Yes, but it's alright if you don't kill right? One has to beware of killing your comrades, while being cautious of being killed, doesn't this solve everything?"

Curling her sexy lips, she overlooked Jin and company.

With everyone biting down on their teeth, not knowing what to do, Ratten without hesitation took out her magic flute and gave orders to the salamanders:

"Okay! Go and have fun with your comrades!"

Fireballs then started raining down from the roof caused by the Salamanders, causing the participants to tense up.

Just when they were going to decide that retaliating was the only choice— A huge shadow that was like a hurricane extinguished all the fireballs that were being fired.

"What.....!"

The smile on Ratten disappeared. The black shadows collected together to form a new shape.

Her gaze shifted to the sky, in the next moment, a dazzling brilliance stimulated her eyes.

It was a figure that had brilliant fluttering blonde hair. A vampire pureblood, spreading her wings open, Leticia looked down on Ratten.

"I found you, manipulator of rats."

Leticia stared at Ratten with killing intent that anyone could sense, her usual mildness was nowhere to be seen.

After Ratten who was standing at the center of the Salamanders saw Leticia's beauty, she couldn't help but exclaim happily:

"Wahahaha.....! A genuine! A real pureblood vampire! Wow.....what a beautiful girl! The shinning blond-silvery hair! Arghhh mp! I am too excited now."

Leticia was stared at intensely by Ratten who was in a trance. Realising this flaw, Leticia removed the spear from the gift card and struck her.

As if dancing, the attack was dodged by Ratten's fluid movements, who once again looked at Leticia.

"Ara, I was merely praising you, isn't that reaction too over the top?"

Although she had the smile on her face, Ratten's domineering eyes were entirely different from before.

The two sides stared at each other in a deadlock.

At this time lighting, fiery red flames and dark wind was forming up cyclones due to their collision at the end of the town.

Probably it was Kuro Usagi and Sandra who had started engaging the enemy.

The fighting over at Izayoi's side has intensified as well, with even the shaking reaching here.

"Hehe, it looks more like a festival now, so should I unravel my trump card as well?"

Bringing the magic flute near her mouth, she began to play.

High and low, the melody was depicted as a Benz Allegro rhythm, totally different than the previous melodies it has made. As if waking up something, the earth bulged and lots of pottery-like huge soldiers were made.

It amounted over 10.

The huge soldiers that appeared on the stage area sent out a giant roar:

"BRUUUUUUUUUM!"

Just like a giant storm, the pottery-like huge soldiers took in the air and released it out. Everyone certainly did not expect that many enemies to appear in that short amount of time.

Screams were heard from the communities that were searching for the stained glass.

With a somewhat urgent tone of voice, Leticia questioned Ratten who jumped into the fray.

".....That huge soldier, is a magic item unrelated to [The Pied Piper of Hamelin] right?"

"That's right~ It is a mud doll which is also a super hybrid created by a dependant of a deity. Anyways it is not that impressive. Comparing to someone who is full of brute force, I didn't receive divinity!~"

The last sentence was said with little self-esteem, probably exposing jealously towards Weser.

However, this sentence has an impact on Leticia.

"Did you say divinity.....?"

"Ara? Haven't you solved our puzzle yet? Our master is also a kind of god, so she could assign divinity.....If it's only one person."

Saying that, Ratten showed a discontent expression.

"Well, it doesn't matter. I am so lucky that I can find a girl as cute as you. And since master is also interested in that young boy over there, if you surrender, we can provide magnanimous conditions!"

"It seems to be quite attractive, but I will still reject it.....Jin, are you alright?"

"I am fine, there is no injury."

"Then good. Leave this to me, hurry up and find the stained glass. If those things start breaking everything, it will be difficult to search."

Nodding their heads, Jin and the search teams turned their backs and ran off. Ratten smirked while watching them escape, probably because they aren't as important as the vampire.

Leticia who stayed behind was quickly surrounded by the Salamanders.

Adding the three Sturms, she was completely in a embattled state.

But Leticia did not mind the atmosphere, she simply stared at Ratten with her beautiful eyes and questioned her with a high-pressured attitude:

"Manipulator of rats, was it you who captured Asuka?"

"So what if I did, Vampire-sama? Are you gonna let me taste the strength of a [Little Garden Knight]?"

The magic items that were under Ratten were prepared to take action, just waiting for Leticia to start the provocation.

Even so, Leticia remained undaunted.

"How unfortunate, but the gifts I have now are all third-rate stuff, the only combative stuff I have.....is this [Shadow] gift."

"Shadow?"

Naturally Ratten's line of sight would fall on Leticia's shadow.

She saw that Leticia's shadow gradually changed into numerous blades.

The blades that constantly swirled around didn't look like a shadow, but more like—

"That shadow.....is it [Jaw]? No wait! Vampires aren't supposed to have shadows in the first place....."

"Exactly. In the past I have acquired the position of [Dragon Knight] after reaching the system tree, and this [Shadow], came from the belief of the Dragon."

The calmness of Ratten suddenly disappeared, just when she was thinking whether she had heard it wrongly, Leticia had already taken the chance to let the shadow expand and change its appearance.

The gentle expression Leticia had instantly transformed into a cheeky yet grim look.

"This is retaliation from before! Rat manipulator! You will accept the punishment for hurting my comrades!"

Countless blades of shadow turned into a huge dragon jaw, sweeping the area in accordance to planar diffusion.

The three Sturms that were bitten by the Dragon jaw immediately fell down.

In a nick of time, Ratten jumped upwards to avoid the attack, but when she saw the scene below her, she felt extremely consternated.

"Dragon Knight with a gift containing countless of blades.....? Unless you are the vampire with divinity! Draculea Demon Lord!"

"Although this title is quite nostalgic, but I discarded that name long ago. The Draculea Demon Lord of the vampires have long been overthrown, centuries after the [Fantasy Magic Book Group] was destroyed."

Being scared until her face had turned pale, Ratten immediately ran off the roof, with Leticia chasing her.

"Don't think about running!"

She cleverly manipulated the shadows using her palms to try and catch Ratten.

Jumping down the roof to avoid the ensnarement, Ratten used the Salamanders as a shield.

"You lizards, protect my side and attack her!"

The Salamanders spat out hot breath towards the jumping Leticia. Leticia kept her shadow back and started dealing with the Salamanders. The destructive power of the shadow was too high, it was very difficult to try and subdue them without harming them. If Leticia was serious, she would have taken the lives of the Salamanders.

Taking advantage of the situation, Ratten hid behind the alley, sneakily running off.

(Why is someone like her in this place.....? That Chibi should have been born in the [No Name] community! How does a mere nameless community gather so much talents!)

Ratten originally predicted that she would fight the pureblood vampire, using the Sturm might have been enough. But she did not expect that Leticia had such a powerful gift.

However, there was still a chance of winning, as long as she used the magic flute to constantly control people to engage with her, it was possible to hang on until the time limit.

Ratten ran along Burgundy Rawson Street to try and escape to the church.

The church had displayed lots of stained glass, one of the most important bases in this game. Considering Jin's words and actions, Ratten judged that the participants likely headed off to the church.

(I have already arranged several Sturms to be near the Church! Even if I want to set up the defense, I should go there first.....)

Ratten was in the Renaissance style of town, heading towards the church with the gothic spires.

"—I've been waiting for a long time, counterfeit of [The Pied Piper of Hamelin], no, the real [Rat Joker]."

It was someone wearing a long red dress, Kudou Asuka.

She was back-facing the church with the stained glass, waiting for Ratten.

"You.....Where have you been hiding for so long....."

"The community [Rattenfänger] helped me to hide, of course, it was to defeat you."

Asuka had a confident expression, her hair and skirt flapped around, as if the previous defeat had no influence on her.

On her shoulders was the pointy-hatted faerie.

Seeing the enemy that proclaimed itself as real, Ratten's coquettish face twisted. Tightly gripping the flute like a baton, she shouted:

"You have finally shown yourself, counterfeit.....! Ha! This is good! I will take you as a hostage to deal with the Vampire! Grab her, Sturm!"

"BRUUUUUM!"

The surface bulged upwards, and three Sturms appeared in front of the church, shattering the walls to attack Asuka.

Giving the Sturm one glance, Asuka calmly raised up her gift card.

"Okay, let's settle this like the first time—Come out! Deen!"

The Church was filled with radiant wine red lights, the gift card floated and started spinning, with a roar that could shock the heaven and earth coming from the middle.

"—DEEEEEEeeeeeEEEEEEN"

The Red Iron Giant with a hollow body, answered the call of it's master.

The tone of it's body was like a red sun, carefully designed to show an overwhelming sense of presence. Although Ratten was shocked after seeing Deen, she still commanded the Sturms to attack.

"It.....It doesn't matter! Sturm! Neutralize them completely!"

Like a storm, Sturm started to inhale the surrounding buildings. The crazy turbulence messed up Asuka's hair, but she still stood still.

Asuka kept her calm and confident expression, waiting for the Sturms to attack.

"Do it, Deen, let them see the gap between our levels!"

Deen moved its strange monocular eyes, slowly nodding.

Absorbing lots of rubble, Sturm compressed everything to shoot it out like a mortar.

At the same time, Ratten shouted:

"Mash them! Sturm!"

"Smash them to pieces! Deen!"

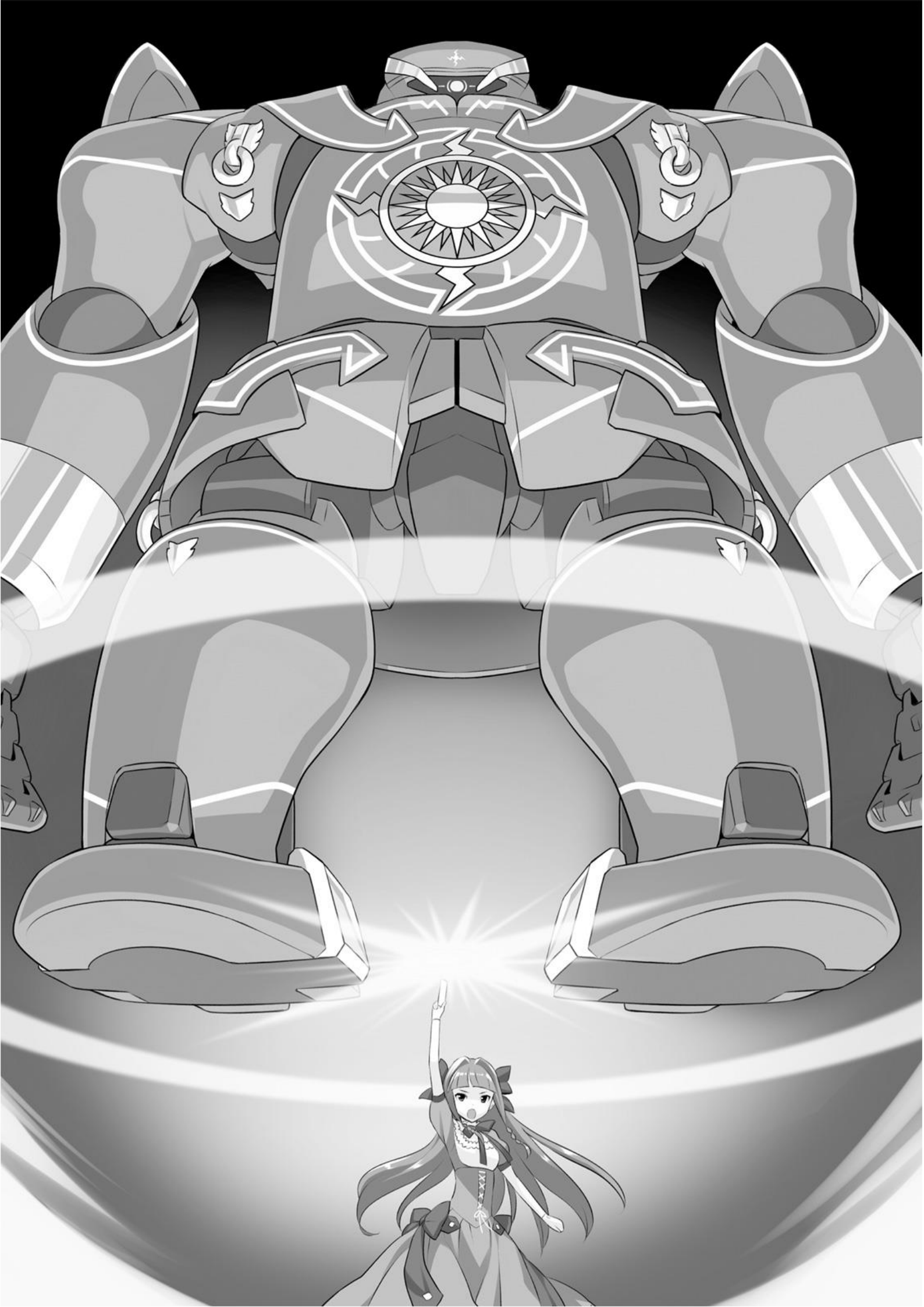
"DEEEEEEeeeeeeEEEEEEEN!"

Under Asuka's orders, Deen's heavy action started accelerating. A high speed attack to the huge rock from the iron arms was enough to knock it down in one blow.

Asuka gave out another order:

"That stained glass is the [True legend]! The efforts would be futile if we broke it! Leave the Church, Deen!"

As if understanding that command, Deen growled and turned his body to crash through the wall. When Deen rammed into a Sturm, he repeatedly punched until it was crushed, leaving no trace behind.



"DEEEEEEeeeeeeEEEEEEEEN!"

The huge iron arms kept knocking down the pottery-formed body again and again.

A figure that keeps attacking violently and roaring, you can even call it the Sacred Iron Magic Being.

Even though Ratten felt fear, she still gave orders to the Sturm:

"The one behind! Just for a moment, suppresse it! Another one use a storm to contain it!"

The Sturm standing behind Deen spewed out air from its air vent for a frontal assault. Another one has begun to create a turbulence from the storm.

However, this level of attack had no effect on the Red Iron Giant. It completely disregarded the turbulence, using its hand to strike down the Sturm. Asuka who was originally standing behind Deen retreated back in order to avoid being drawn into the turbulence, giving instructions while grabbing onto the pillars of the Church.

"Show them the difference of your strengths, Deen!"

One order, and Deen immediately seized Sturm's head, forcibly overpowering it to the ground.

The resistance from the pottery giant soldier had no effect, and with a sound of a strike, it let out a crisp sound before turning into fragments.

Now there is only one left. Just when Asuka was going to give the instructions to beat down the last Sturm— she realised that Ratten had disappeared.

"......She's gone.....?"

Asuka lost her. Unexpectedly letting an enemy escape under her sight. Asuka clicked her tongue and began looking at the surroundings. However she still could not find her, which was expected.

Because Ratten had used the wind whipped up by Sturm— and was flying in the sky.

(You are too far away from the iron doll, young lady.....! This is my win!)

The distance between Deen and Asuka was as much as 18 meters, completely exceeding the distance needed to guard in time.

Ratten who believed that she was going to win aimed the tips of the flute at Asuka's head.

Although Asuka noticed Ratten's attack in a nick of time, but it was still too late. Facing against something she couldn't dodge, came the stab of the magic flute—

"—Pinch her, Deen."

One order, Ratten was firmly pinched by the [Extended] iron arm.

"Eh.....!"

"Bur.....?"

'Pong!' Ratten who was caught by the elongated arm was being thrown towards the Sturm at high speed. The impact of the collision shook the surrounding area.

After the crushing blow on the third Sturm was delivered, Deen let out a wild roar. The movements it used was unexpected judging by its weight, its action could be described as light.

Probably it was Asuka who increased the power of it's strength.

"DEEEEEEeeeeeEEEEEEN!"

The Red Iron Giant let out a roar of triumph, and this was when Ratten realised.

This humanoid with a huge body of iron, how was it moved into the center of the cave in the first place.

And what methods it used to disappear from the huge cave in such a short period.

Getting the answers she sought, Ratten looked up at Deen with fear in her eyes.

"Re.....Retractable metal.....! Only the Dragon [Pureblood] could forge these kind of things!"

—The god that created the mobile doll. The quality of the raw materials could increase or decrease, and it is said that the material was the same as the Rod that [Monkey King] of the seven Demon Kings loved. After that the ground faeries would forge the materials into the iron doll. Contrary to the hollow body, it had extraordinarily huge body weight.

Receiving the mortal wound from the fist attack, Ratten spat out blood and keeled over.

Asuka strode over to the the dying yet smiling Ratten.

"This should even out the kicks that you gave me. You can call this a lose-lose situation.....But I'm still not done, I still have another debt I haven't settled."

'Pa' Asuka pointed downwards.

Deen nodded towards Asuka's instruction and placed Ratten down.

After being released, Ratten pulled her knees together, trying to stand up with her shaking legs, before collapsing to the ground. Her white clothes have been stained with blood, and towards Asuka who did not deliver the finishing blow, cast a look of doubt.

"What.....What are you saying.....?"

"Do you remember? A week ago, I lost to your rat manipulation. In other words, the last debt needs to be settled.....to put it bluntly, is to hear you play a tune."

Asuka sat down on Deen's huge palm, and pointed at Ratten with her slender fingers.

"Let's play a game, I will allow you to play a song. You will try to play a tune that could charm my Deen into obeying you."

In the line of sight of the challenge, you could identify the strong will of [Winning without a sense of accomplishment].

What Asuka meant was, she wanted to win under the same conditions, obtaining a perfect form of victory.

"........So that's how it is........"

Ratten breathed in deeply as if swallowing both air and blood, regulating to her original breathing.

"Okay.....I will accept your game, let me play a tune."

Putting the magic flute into the move, she revealed her usual mischievous smile and threw out a wink.

"Fantasia of [The Pied Piper of Hamelin], please listen quietly♪"

Part 6

Inside Hamelin city, there were three figures that were freely running around.

The trigeminal Vajra, [Mock Divinity·Vajra] that Kuro Usagi held in her hands created a thunderous roaring sound.

"Sandra-sama! Attack from behind!"

"Okay!"

The [Mock Divinity·Vajra] let out lightning.

While the [Dragon Horn] released out red lotus flames.

Pest let the dark wind surround herself like a ball and stood leisurely, blocking the two rushing attacks from both directions.

"Till now you still don't understand that there is no meaning in doing this?"

Rotating her wrist, the dark wind that Pest created separated into four tornadoes and headed towards Sandra.

Both of them kept their gifts and their distance away from Pest. From the beginning, the attack that had repeated lots of times had made Sandra anxious.

"I knew it, even with two divine gifts attacking at the same time, it will still be the same result."

"Indeed. It is obvious that she is trying to stall the time till the end of the game.....But this power is quite mysterious. According to what Leticia had said, this should be a power that draws out vitality."

Kuro Usagi had a more calmer tone than Sandra's.

This was also because Pest had several spirit powers.

Kuro Usagi stopped her movements and gave the tired Sandra a glance, before questioning Pest who was on the rooftop:

"[Black Percher], your true motive....is to be a species of god right?"

"Eh?"

"That's right."

"Eh?'

Hearing these words, Sandra could only stare at them in disbelief.

"As discussed with Izayoi before, I had thought about this possibility. The spirit power you have is not the [Merit of the death of the 130 children] from [The Pied Piper of Hamelin], but from the 14th century to the 17th century, the people who lost their lives due to black death—A demon that has eighty million deaths as a merit right?"

Hearing those words, Sandra paled.

"The merit of eighty million deaths.....? To have that much you could be a god....."

"Wrong."

"Impossible."

Being soundly defeated, Sandra discouragingly shut her mouth.

"If someone wants to be a god except the strongest kind of race, they must have merit of [More Than a Certain Number of Faith]. Even if she killed that much people, the condition is not fulfilled and thus can't be a god, Sandra-sama."

"Rea.....Really?"

"But there are many forms of belief. If it was based on the terror then the gods are not a minority, take the evil god Tantra as an example—The problem is Pest, even

in its terror of faith, you can never become a god. Because the future generations found a cure to go against you.....a way to fight against Black Death, thus you couldn't become a god."

"....."

"So you want the most semblance, but you were already a feared person.....and that was documented in the [Fantasy Magic Book Group] Grimoire talking about the death god of spotted patterns. And in order to let you come here with the identity of a god—"

"Unfortunately, several things are wrong."

Eh? Kuro Usagi closed her mouth.

With her confident theories being denied, she depressingly drooped her rabbit ears.

Twirling her hair with her fingers, Pest replied with a slight melancholic tone:

"But.....it's fine, let's take this as dragging the time, so I will tell you. I did not come to the Little Garden on my own. The summoner was the commander of the Demon Lord army, [Fantasy Magic Book Group]."

"Eh....."

"He must have wanted me to be his pawn. For a demon with eighty million deaths as merit.....No, if I had sat on the death god's seat with the persona of the [Eighty million demon spirit group], then maybe I could have been a god."

Kuro Usagi simply just wanted to doubt her own rabbit ears.

"What you mean is.....You are not the incarnation of the god of black death but the spirits of the people who died in the Black Death?"

"Yeah, I am the representative.....However, prior to my summoning, the Demon Lord had already lost a gift game and thus, left this world."

After that moment, the passage of time of history had several experiences.

Nobody knows why the summoning was completed, and from the other time period came the summoned Pest.

Cutting the world's population by 30%, the fatal disease that created an era of panic came to Little Garden as a young girl.

"This is the [Host's Permission] that I had obtained as merit. I.....no, this merit can set out special rules and permission, one special rule is that it can make everyone experience the anger of the people in that era. That the cause of the Black Death in the world, bringing hunger and poverty, the root of all evil— Was the revenge against the lazy Sun.....!"

The usually emotionless Pest let out a tone of agitation for the first time.

Which is why in response to the resentment of eighty million people, she came to Little Garden and challenged the Sun.

As if in response to her determination, the dark wind grew more violent, creating a blustery.

Calming down her flying, Kuro Usagi looked at the excited Pest.

"So she wanted revenge against the Sun.....as befitting of a Demon Lord, so boastful. That's why you did underhanded things to Shiroyasha who has the sun authority right?"

"Whu....What now?"

"Nothing we can do, our strength is useless, there is nothing we can do."

Hearing Kuro Usagi's reply, Sandra's face grew paler. If this goes on, both of them literally have no chance of winning.

And then Kuro Usagi had another way of winning.

In order to try this winning attempt, the main battle force must be together, and the help of a key figure.—

(Izayoi-san....! Are you not done yet.....!)

As Kuro Usagi's high performance rabbit ears could grasp the situation of the game, she was full of anxiety.

Taking into account of Izayoi's personality, he wouldn't waste time teasing opponents weaker than him. He would have spared no effort in beating down Weser, and then joyfully challenge the Demon Lord.

However, Kuro Usagi did not know that the enemy was bestowed with divinity, therefore the fighting could only continue to be delayed.

"........Okay, let's continue the game. Both of you are important chess pieces, so I will be your company until the closing time of the game."

With her previous emotion, Pest calmly put on a preparing posture and a smile.

The trembling Kuro Usagi and Sandra could only struggle desperately in this game.

Part 7

The defense and offense that could destroy mountains and rivers, in a moment had already caused destruction to the city, creating a hill of rubble.

Facing someone who could flip the earth, manipulate rivers, and to be able to change the structure of the earth's crust, Izayoi used his limbs to repel the attacks coming from Weser.

"What.....how arrogant!"

Countless rocks and water columns came striking at his direction. Izayoi merely concentrated on his momentum before using his fist to hit them off.

Weser who hid behind the scattered debris seized the chance and closed up to Izayoi's front. Noticing his action, Izayoi used the rock as a foothold and jumped away to pull the distance.

The pair of agile legs were Izayoi's biggest weapon, but was also used as a method to protect himself.

The other side of the town instantly turned into rubble. Then, Izayoi stopped his movements and looked at Hamelin.

This was certainly not because he had heard Kuro Usagi's self-murmuring.

Still keeping vigilant, Weser asked him:

"What's wrong kid, being distracted isn't really your style."

".....I am tired of it."

"Huh?"

"I said I am tired already. Although hitting and being hit is a fresh experience, but this is way too simple and boring."

Izayoi relaxed his neck joints. Although he was bruised, the only injury that was worth mentioning was the one he suffered in the start.

Both of their strengths were equal, but Izayoi's leg strength overwhelmingly prevailed over Weser's.

Relying on his agile legs and also trying to match it with his movements, waiting for Weser to slip up. Although there was a chance to target the opponent's weakness, but in the end the result would be the same,

Izayoi who hates never changing formulaic scenarios was of course tired.

Badly bruised, Weser who was breathing heavily kept his fighting stance, placed his giant flute on his shoulders and asked:

"Since you said it like that.....what are you going to do?"

"Hmmm~ About that....."

Kicking up the rubble, Izayoi began to seriously consider.

Not knowing what he was thinking, Weser could only stare at him with a dumbfounded expression.

"Okay! We will do it like that! I want to defeat the trump card that you keep hiding from me!"

"What trump card?"

"Hey, don't act dumb, every time you hit me, you always wanted to use your hidden ace card."

Weser's expression became distorted. From the start, neither of them was the winner because of this reason.

Every time when Weser was close to Izayoi or when Izayoi's speed prevailed, intending to trade blows, that man's eyes always revealed a dangerous light.

Because of this point, Izayoi wasn't able to determine the winner and loser.

"If this goes on it will be forever, so we will reveal the winner in an all for nothing blow, interesting right?"

Compared to Izayoi's 'Wahaha' laughter, Weser looked very dignified.

This was a very welcoming situation due to the current stalemate. As long as this continues to drag on, sooner or later the time will run out. That way, the talents would fall into the hand of the Host's side.

.....But then, although Weser thinks it would be a pity to kill this brat, but he is also quite expectant, wanting to see what is the limit of Izayoi's strength.

It was unknown if Izayoi had perceived Weser's complex mood, but then he suddenly kept his expression.

"....."

"And everytime you rush at me with those eyes, it makes me very uncomfortable. That feeling of [Once this hits, I will win!] kind of expression.....hohoho, thinking about that makes me furious."

'Ko Ko ko!' Izayoi kicked the wreckage, unsuspectingly got close to Weser and opened his arms.

"I say, Weser. I ah.....want to destroy your arrogance."

Izayoi had just made a serious provocation that cannot be taken back.

".....Ah."

Hearing these presumptuous words, Weser felt his body become weak.

Scratching his short black hair firmly, he pulled up the collar of his uniform, with eyes full of murderous intent.

"OK, then go and die! BRAT!"

All of his spirit power was released.

Weser raised his magic flute, and started moving it in a circular arc, as if drawing a circle track.

In response to his actions, an audible sound and vibration that could knock people off their feet appeared.

Up to now, this vibration couldn't be compared with the other ones before, and diastrophism started gathering in front of Weser's flute.

The waving of the magic flute has collected diastrophism energy.

The shaking gradually quieted down. Izayoi lowered his back, like a sprinter ready for his run.

He wasn't just relying on his wrist, but the entire body as a driving force. Because it was the first time Izayoi gets to use his whole strength, his chest was full of expectation.

"Good good great.....! This is worth the wait.....!"

To allow the attack to land, he turned his back.

Just when the earth was going back to its peaceful slumber—Both side's killer moves started a collision.

Part 8

The melody that [The Pied Piper of Hamelin] played, was by far the most beautiful music Asuka had ever heard.

The magic flute had wonderful highs and lows — An extremely dreamy tune that encroached upon Asuka.

(Ah.....This is a bit treacherous.)

With the tune of the magic flute going through her ears, Asuka saw the world of dreams which she had discarded.

A world that she always yearned for from a young age to go out of the cage.

Over the wall, across the ocean, across the border.....

Being together with her deceased parents and sisters, not bound by any chain, running around with a smile on their faces.

And also experience Halloween together as a family.

The discarded world lingered behind, deeply stimulating the ear.

So that's how it was, this was indeed the magic flute.

Asuka quietly stared, while screaming [Trick or Treat!] in her dreams, happily frolicking with herself.

Just when Asuka was going to get conquered by these intoxicating and sweet dreams—She recalled a promise:

"Someday — We will hold our own Halloween—!"

(.....Yes, for now I will reserve my [Trick or Treat!] until that time comes.)

Asuka made that promise deep in her heart, and then suddenly woke up from the intoxication. She soon realized that the play had already ended.

Ratten started panting and gave out a troubled smile.

"After all.....we only said it will be one tune. Have you had a dream, my guest?"

".....Yeah, it was a very beautiful dream."

This was not a hyperbole evaluation. After all, there will be no more chances to reunite with her loved ones that died. And since the last memory of that dream was her family members smiling—Perhaps this was truly a blessing.

'PaPaPa'—Asuka clapped her hands unknowingly.

Ratten let out a bitter smile. If she breached the contract and started blowing another tune, maybe she could dominate Asuka. However as a member of a Demon Lord with dignity, it didn't allow her to do such underhanded schemes.

After all, she was unable to shake the loyalty of the Red Iron Giant, and thus she had really lost this game.

Kneeling on the ground, Ratten gradually started to disappear with fresh blood dripping.

"Ah~ Ah.....I've lost. Forget it, that hit just now had almost taken my life. And to add on the strength needed to play the tune.....it appears I cannot maintain the spirit power of the demon."

"....."

"Let's hopefully meet again, cute lady. I thank you for your appreciation♪ And say hi to my master for me."

"I want to thank you for that beautiful tune."

Asuka did not go to deliver the final blow as Ratten had lost and gone with the wind.

Picking the flute that was on the floor, she heard voices coming from the other end of the church.

It was Leticia and Jin.

"Asuka-sama! Are you alright!"

"Un, my hair is a bit messy, but that's about it."

"Really? Thank goodness. Although I determined their motives, they wouldn't do something that evil.....no, now is not the time to discuss about this. We will detail out the omissions, anyways now the stained glass...."

"Yeah, there are real stained glass here, keep them well."

"Okay.....Okay, then Asuka-sama?"

"I am going to fight the Demon Lord with this child here."

Asuka pointed, Deen started moving it's heavy body.

Leaving the shocked Leticia and Jin, she hastily rushed to the location of the Demon Lord.

Part 9

After the powerful strengths collided with each other, the rubble that piled like a hill was blown away, turning the surroundings into a scorched earth.

Quietly looking at the fragments of the shattered magic flute, Weser murmured:

".....Hey, kid."

"So how?"

"Are you really human?"

Izayoi could only shrug his shoulders, having a nostalgic feeling that someone had mentioned it before.

However, Izayoi's right hand was appalling. His wrist broken, the skin was torn off as if an explosion had happened inside. If anyone saw him lying on the ground this way, they would see the more inferior side of Izayoi. As repayment for his arm, he had broken the enemy's main power. Which is to say- the outcome was worth the price.

Slowly bringing himself up, Izayoi raised his left hand to request another battle with Weser.

"Okay, let's do it again. You should be able to fight even if your flute is broken right?"

".....No, it appears not."

'ShaSha'.....Weser's body started crumbling.

Looking at both his hands which were turning into light grain, he murmured out:

"Tsk! Since the method of summoning item had been broken, of course it will be like this."

"……You are going to disappear?"

"Yeah……AH~ Darn it, I shouldn't have given in to your provocation."

"Don't say such heartless words, I had fun. And it really hurts."

While applying pressure to his right arm, Izayoi smiled while cold sweat trickled down his spine. Actually the damage to his hand was so serious, in fact, Izayoi should be rolling on the ground while wailing, but his pride did not allow him to do such unpromising acts.

Izayoi turned away from the disappearing Weser.

"Good bye! Although I've said it a couple of times, but I am very happy. After all, so far, there was no one who could trade fists with me."

"OF COURSE, BRAT! If everyone was just like you who could take it.....well, take care."

'Wahaha!' Izayoi laughed while leaving.

Weser who watched him leave looked up to the sky.

"Yeah, someone as arrogant as you.....The previous boss was already enough."

The sun setting and the figure of the juvenile made Weser see traces of the distant past.

He then realised that this sort of dedication would only lead to defeat, before quietly disappearing while maintaining a bitter smile.

Part 10

What appeared was a particularly strong shaking. This had made Kuro Usagi and Sandra to stop and look at each other.

Using her gorgeous sleeve to wipe away her sweat, Sandra whispered:

"That earthquake just now was quite big eh."

"YES! Izayoi-san's battle seemed to have determined a winner!"

Following that came a burst from an explosion. Observing the distant location, you could figure out that the Sturm that was released got destroyed. The participants might have struck it down.

Hiding behind the minaret, Kuro Usagi looked happy because the tide of battle had changed.

On the other hand, Pest was assessing the game situation in her mind while watching the Sturms fall.

(Ratten and Weser.....both of them have been defeated....)

Pest gazed at the sun which had already set, looking a bit empty in her eyes.

Thinking about it, maybe the plan to take control of the situation was too naive, leading to these consequences. Pest must reflect on this.

1 week + 24 hours — confused the eyes with the time, with the plan of stalling the time till the judgement, in the end she kept leaving the passive position.

If from the start they gave up on defense, letting Weser and Ratten to commence the massacre.....the fight wouldn't have deteriorated to this point.

There wasn't any option that one could win a gift game without any fights commencing.

(They still haven't broken the stained glass.....there are still 58.)

'Is it time?' Pest started talking to herself. If the grimoire was to be destroyed, the spirit power that pushes her to the death god's position would also disappear. Once she lost the spirit power of gods, even her [Host's permission] would also disappear.

Ratten and Weser.....Although the development of the situation because of the master-slave relationship was established, they were still loyal to their initial partner. Pest gave prayers to them

"—.....Enough."

"Eh?"

"I don't want to drag this game anymore, it will be good as long as I have Shiroyasha — I'll kill the rest."

Ending the conversation, dark wind rushed to the sky.

The clouds of dark wind started dispersing instantly, spreading into the air and pouring down on Hamelin city.

The air begins to get corroded, with birds falling to the ground and rats instantly dying as soon as contact with the Dark Wind was made.

"This wind is different than the previous one, a touch of it will bring instantaneous death."

"Eh....."

Pest stretched out her fingers. The wind that blended with the air wouldn't allow any sort of power to get close to it.

Although Kuro Usagi raised her Vajra and released lighting, it was immediately broken up in a moment, and thus running was the only option.

"It.....It really is the power of the [Giver]! This is the grace given by the god of death....."

—Given the grace of the wind of death.

Becoming a [Giver] after the identity of god, Pest's dark wind would be able to bring death to anyone who touches it. Judging by this point, Pest did indeed have excellent qualities to become a god.

"Althou.....Although I heard about the Demon Lord who kills people just by being looked upon in the Celtic mythology, I never thought that this is now a similar situation! Physical properties definitely won't be able to penetrate the wind of death."

Both of them started screaming, the only thing they could do was retreat.

The release of the Death Wind started spreading outwards.

While dodging the Death Wind that came from the sky, she also felt fear from this strength.

"No.....not good! If this goes on, the participants in charge of searching for the stained glass will....!"

However, they did not have time to pay attention to the other participants.

They can't warn everyone scattered in the city with just the both of them.

Although the crowd sought refuge in buildings, several members of [Salamadra] that were in charge of protecting the participants died upon being engulfed by the wind. Sandra nervously bit down on her lip while looking at this scene.

"They dare.....to put [Salamandra].....!"

Sandra's face reddened due to the burning anger.

Also seeming to make up her mind, Kuro Usagi decided to take out a black and white decorated gift card.

(No choice since it's this way, I can only do it now—!)

But, just when she was about to take out that card.

Her sights fell onto a participant that was going to be swept into the Dark Wind.

Which was the dryad teenager who had decided the [Area for the creator duel].

(Dam.....Damn it! Why at this timing!)

Kuro Usagi wanted to rush to save the boy, but it was too late. The Death Wind rushed towards the boy's head.

"—DEEEEEEEeeeEEEEEEEEEN!"

What followed it was a huge red iron arm blocking it down.

If the Death wind made all living things die, then this wouldn't work on an iron doll, which was its predator.

With the lifeless invincible Magic Being blocking down the Death Wind, it protected the teenager. Waiting for the crisis to get by, Asuka stuck her head out from Deen and said to the Dryad Teenager:

"Run now! Deal with the stained glass a bit later."

"Ye.....Yes!"

The dryad teenager was scared until his feet started trembling, but he immediately escaped into the building interior.

Finding Asuka to be safe, Kuro Usagi happily screamed:

"Asuka-san! I'm glad you are alright!"

"We'll save the touching reunion for later! Look in front! In front!"

'Eh?' Kuro Usagi turned back, only seeing Pest close up while releasing the Death Wind.

"Oi Oi! Don't be distracted, you idiot rabbit!"

From the side came Izayoi who kicked down the Death Wind.

Pest who couldn't comprehend the situation was stunned.

"The gift was destroyed.....? You....."

"Let's get things straight, I am HUMAN! Demon Lord-sama."

Dispersing the Death Wind, Izayoi took the advantage and rushed at Pest.

The kick he delivered saw Pest for the first time using her hands to defend. But her hand did not completely block the attack, making Izayoi's attack land on her.

Pest flew and smashed past several of the buildings.

Opening her small mouth, Sandra looked at Izayoi in awe.

"Eh Eh? That person, destroyed the gift....?"

"Tha.....about that.....Kuro Usagi feels that there is some unexplained mystery in Izayoi-san's body...."

Seeing the same thing happening again, Kuro Usagi felt her heart sigh because of Izayoi's cheating strength. She also originally thought that the winner had already been decided.

But the next moment, the tens of millions of complaints were sent flying when the rubble was blown away.

Standing at the center was Pest who was smiling at Izayoi while her wounds and even her cloths were restored in a moment.

".....Yeah, after all you are only human. Even if the Death Wind is ineffective, there is no need for any caution."

"What?"

"What I mean is that if you don't even have the strength to destroy stars, you won't even be able to defeat a Demon Lord."

Pest casually waved her arms. The eighty million voices of resentment attacked Izayoi using shockwaves. The unexpected attack sent Izayoi flying upwards before falling down.

Although he spat out some blood, the injury was not all that serious.

Izayoi minded what Pest had said previously.

".....You actually dare to say that I don't have the strength to destroy stars? Heh! This provocation is a bit daring, you spotted loli! Since you dare to say that then I will.....!"

"Please.....Please wait a moment Izayoi-san! Considering the fact that you fight with that bruised right hand, this is the time to respect the original battle plan!"

Kuro Usagi frantically tried to stop him. Izayoi unhappily frowned and curled his lips.

".....What a disaster, so what? Since you want to do it yourself, you should be responsible for giving out directions, Kuro Usagi."

"No problem, but what do we do about this wind? If this goes on, the others will be wiped out one by one right?"

Placing the black and white gift card on her lips, Kuro Usagi smiled.

"Please relax! Kuro Usagi will now invite the Demon Lord and the main strength—to the Moon♪"

'What?' This doubtful question immediately disappeared.

Following the glowing of the black and white gift card, the situation worsened, the surrounding light became darker and stars started appearing.

There was a rapid drop in temperature and the freezing atmosphere in this harsh environment attacked Izayoi and the others.

When the violent power started to settle down, everyone opened their eyes and looked towards the sky.

Little Garden could be seen hanging in the sky city.

Looking at the many stone-like white statues of the moon shrine, Pest paled and started shouting:

"Thi....This is the [Moon Shrine]! Not only the god of war, even the Luna divinity gift also....."

"YES! This gift is the temple where us [Moon Rabbits] were summoned into! With Indra-sama and Luna-sama giving us the [Moon Shrine]!"

Spreading out her arms, Kuro Usagi looked like she was making an introduction to the Little Garden City and the starry sky. Although it was called a shrine here, there were only white stone statues that were like the ruins of the shrine.

Gazing ahead, the sight was all gray wilderness. An uninhabitable place that biological creatures couldn't even survive.

If they left the place of the shrine, the moon's brutal environment will instantly bring death to any living thing.

"But.....But.....! The rules state that it is forbidden to leave the plating surface range....."

"We are obediently staying at the range of the game disk! But only the height is a bit unusual."

"Gu.....!"

Then what exactly happened? Did she mean that she had shifted the whole celestial body to the top of Hamelin?

Born deities—Are the dependants and also the strongest race that strong?

"So now we don't have to worry about the members from the participant's side! Sandra-sama and Izayoi-san, please suppress the Demon Lord for a while! Kuro Usagi will also join the battle! Asuka-san please come this way."

After those words, Sandra and Izayoi immediately launched an assault on Pest.

Although Pest was quite nervous due to the isolation, she still released out Dark Wind.

"It doesn't matter, I will end this game before all the stained glass are found....!"

"Ha! Try it if you think you can!"

Even when his whole body was enveloped with shock, Izayoi still continued charging. This time, he gave out a similar kick, but was easily dodged. He should

have accumulated fatigue after that strenuous battle with Weser, and not using his right hand also had a serious impact.

Sandra aimed at the Death Wind dodged by Izayoi and breathed out flames. Even though Pest was enveloped by the flames, her wounds instantly healed.

If one blow was needed to defeat the god with population of eighty million people, Sandra's firepower wasn't enough.

"Ha! So that's how it is! The statement just now was not just a figure of speech eh!"

"Yeah, If you want to defeat me, you will have to resort to striking me with power that can destroy stars!"

Pest used the cohesion of the resentment and attacked with a swirl, aiming at Izayoi's abdomen.

Accompanying Pest's movements, Izayoi used his left hand to counter back Pest's attack with a punch.

With both of them flying backwards, a new crater was created on the moon's surface.

While Izayoi and Sandra were combating, Kuro Usagi handed a gift card with a three-pronged spear on it to Asuka.

".....? What is this?"

"Please keep it down. This is called the [History of Poetry· Mahabharata's paper]. Remember the Spear of Indra that Kuro Usagi summoned against [Perseus] not too long ago, this is used to summon that spear."

Asuka widened her eyes in surprise.

"You said the Indra's spear from the History of Poetry Mahabharata.....?"

"YES! Has Asuka-san heard about the History of Poetry Mahabharata before?"

"Yes.....Yeah. I heard of the name, I remember it was one of the world's three History of Poetry right? If it was a Japanese example, then it would be as famous as Momotaro."

Kuro Usagi nodded in agreement.

—《History of Poetry Mahabharata》 was one of the most famous Hindu mythologies, alongside with 《History of Poetry Ramayana》 they were said to be the two Indian History of Poetry.

Constituted by one hundred thousand verses, a History of Poetry filled with many mythology and legends.

Holding the paper in front of Asuka, Kuro Usagi started warning about it:

"This paper, can summon out the weapon similar to Indra's. But be warned, although this weapon is strong, you can only use it once in a gift game."

Another layer of nervousness started appearing on Asuka's expression.

"Wait.....Wait a moment, are you thinking about letting me be in charge of using this?"

"YES! Asuka has the power to let gifts have ten times their normal strength! Kuro Usagi will create the opportunity, so take advantage and use the spear to pierce through the Demon Lord! If that happens, we will definitely win this gift game!"

Kuro Usagi held Asuka's hand firmly. After that the paper let out a radiant light before turning into a spear. What appeared on Asuka's hand was a heavy throwing spear.

The weapon that held Indra's spirit power.

That dazzling appearance that would make one hold their breath, couldn't help but make Asuka cower.

"The weapon with Indra's spirit power.....But I....."

Hesitation was an expected reaction for Asuka.

Can she perfectly use this godly spear? Since it's a one time try, it would be better if it was Izayoi right. Kuro Usagi smiled at Asuka's distorted face that bore the weight on her shoulders and said:

"No problem. Please believe in yourself. Kuro Usagi can guarantee that you, Asuka, definitely have the capability for this task! Moreover, doesn't it look like you have the strongest partner at the moment?"

Kuro Usagi spread her arms in front of Deen. Remaining silent, the rugged-looking Iron Doll merely nodded its head. And all that is left to do was to give the best she can and leave the rest to fate.

".....I understand."

Asuka looked at Kuro Usagi with determined eyes, in which Kuro Usagi nodded in response.

Turning away, Kuro Usagi took out another paper, before jumping into the vortex of Death Wind.

Asuka used this moment and gave the Spear of Indra to Deen, with Deen quietly wielding the spear waiting for the indication. Asuka hesitantly gazed at the pointy-hatted faerie.

"After this battle is over, the 130 sacrificed kids will also disappear. That way, you will also disappear too.....doesn't it matter to you?"

"Un."

The faerie nodded her small head in agreement. This is the knowledge that the faerie had gained from the seven days.

The reason why she left the others and moved individually, was because of the journey throughout the countless years, their spirit power also started to crack. That's why the faeries addressed her as the number 131 child.

However, it was because of this feature that the group could maintain its population. If the grimoire of Hamelin disappeared, the faeries will also embark on the path of disappearance.

Silently enduring the welling of emotions in her heart, in any case, Asuka must live up to their own determination.

With a firm voice filled with integrity, Asuka responded:

"I understand, I will defeat the Demon Lord."

Both of them nodded at each other. Deen didn't say anything, but it clenched the weapon tightly to express its will.

In order to create the final advantage for the attack, Kuro Usagi chased after Izayoi and Sandra and came to the forefront.

There was no Vajra in her hands. Just like that, she rushed forward under the absence of any weapons.

Seeing her recklessly charging to the enemy, Sandra anxiously shouted:

"No.....No can do, Kuro Usagi! What are you doing.....!"

"I am going to dispel the death wind! Both of you please support me!"

With her foot on the gray earth, Kuro Usagi dashed forward.

Pest who was full of anxiety evoked out Death Wind and flew upwards, avoiding Kuro Usagi's attack.

"If I beat you down.....!"

"Then you will have revenge against the sun? Then lets see if you can withstand this radiance!"

Kuro Usagi raised up the [Mahabharata paper].

The light that flowed out of it wasn't brilliant red, nor blue colored lighting.

Shining as golden as the sun, Kuro Usagi was soon dyed with sacred colors, before a gold-colored armour appeared on her.

Hit by the sunlight, the Death Wind dissipated, and the fog lifted in a moment.

"How.....How could it.....!"

Pest cried out while being scared and afraid. Even she herself, was not aware of her weak point.

Indeed, her [Host's permission] could have the power to seal the sun.

But, the biggest reason why Black Death was a pandemic was due to [The mini ice-age after the 14th century].

Then if it was shone by the awakening sun, it could have the miracle of driving away the Death Wind.

"The army of god Indra and moon god Luna and then the sun god Surya.....! You could invoke 3 days out of the 12 days, you monster—!"

Pest suddenly backed off, trying to hold the last line of defense.

With the whole body radiating out sunlight, Kuro Usagi took the opportunity to shout towards Asuka:

"Asuka-san. Now!"

Hearing Kuro Usagi's shout, Asuka raised up her right hand.

"Hit it! Deen!"

"DEEEEEEEEeeeeeEEEEEN!"

The Red Iron Giant roared while it shot out the weapon.

In response to Asuka's statement, the Spear of Indra gathered one thousand beams of thunder and struck Pest. Pest whose attention was diverted due to Kuro Usagi, was pierced by the spear above the moon.

"This.....This kind.....degree.....is nothing....."

Even when struck with the thousand burning thunders, Pest continued to resist.

That's right, this kind of destructive power was not enough to defeat this Demon Lord.

She once said that if the strike was not enough to destroy stars, then Gods can't be defeated.

However, the thunder released by the Spear of Indra did not diminish in power, but emitted a brilliant light. Taking a deep breath, Kuro Usagi used a tone of a winner and said towards Pest:

"It's no use, this is the spear that was blessed by Indra. In exchange for the sun helmet, obtained the victory of fate (Gift) spear."

The thunder gradually changed from thousand to tens of thousands, from tens of thousands to millions, it's strength rapidly increasing. Before the opponent gets completely burned, the Spear of Indra which doesn't know defeat will keep on shining endlessly.

—[Sun Helmet] and [Victory spear].

In the legend of the 《History of Poetry Mahabharata》 where Karna obtained the gift. As the sun god Karna gave the armor of immortality to Indra, and in return, got one miracle back, which was the spear that guaranteed to win as long as it hit the enemy.

If the death god had the wind that gave the favor of [Death].

Then the army god's spear, would be a weapon that brings [Victory].

"How is this possible..."

"—Good bye. [Black Percher]."

Finishing those words, a particularly strong light covered the entire surface of the moon.

The Spear sent out a rumbling sound and ejected overwhelming heat, before bursting into pieces together with the Demon Lord.

Epilogue

Part 1

—Boundary wall, stage area. [Birth of the Fire Dragon Festival] operational headquarters.

10 hours after the game had started.

Those stained glass that depicted victims that fell during the Black Death and rat catchers were all shattered, while it was changed with the stained glass that depicted the Weser river. After the [Shatter the False Legend, Making the True Legend Known] was fulfilled. The participants' vision suddenly shattered and expandly opened back.

Looking around, the familiar sight of the minaret and stage area with the chandeliers emitting light could be seen.

The dusk imitation and the scenery of the town appeared in everyone.

While the participants were still standing idly, Shiroyasha suddenly popped out in front of everyone in a mist-like form.

Scratching her head while having an embarrassed expression was in fact much in line with her appearance.

"Ladies and gentleman, that performance was great. As the Floor Master of the Eastern district.....I must express my gratitude and apologies. Though I put on a good look, but the result was that I was sealed from the start to finish. Aiyah, I am really sorry....."

Although Shiroyasha felt very ashamed, nobody spoke out words of accusations.

Everyone had placed their trust on the strongest [Floor Master], and it wouldn't shake because of this small matter.

With Shiroyasha finishing her acknowledgements, Sandra stepped forward with her arms open.

"—The Demon Lord game has come to an end, and we were victorious!"

The audience bursted into cheers. Hearing the speech from the floor master was enough to make the crowd taste the feeling of victory.

Some people were liberated from the curse.

Some people were moved to tears because their comrades were going to be saved.

Some people were glad that the Demon Lord's threat was gone.

Shiroyasha, who looked at this scene, kindly gave orders to the participants:

"Give treatment to those injured, those uninjured will provide assistance. After this is over.....the granting of awards for the achievement of defeating the Demon Lord, as well as continuing the festival, while also holding celebrations. People can rejoice and wait expectantly for it bah♪"

This decree issued by Shiroyasha made everyone cheer even louder.

The communities started mobilising to clean up the mess after the game.

Part 2

—Boundary wall, stage area, foot of the hills, Art exhibition grounds.

While the participants were all preparing for the celebration, Asuka came alone into the huge cave.

Although she was worried whether Kasukabe who was infected with Black Death was alright, she still gave priority to this place.

Coming into the center of the cave where Deen was originally being displayed, Asuka opened the hidden doors hidden in the rock wall and went in, where they held the gift game to obtain Deen.

It was obvious that was the interior of the boundary wall, but there were still rays of sun that shone deeply in.

Asuka then muttered:

".....The grimoire of Hamelin disappeared, is it really alright?"

"Yes, this way, we can expect to return back to the original time era."

Lots of voices echoed in the large cave, which was confirmed to be the 130 children that were sacrificed in Hamelin.

"But once they return, the faerie that is number 131—That young hatted faerie should disappear without a trace right?"

It is said that she was created from the countless years in the journey as the fragments of the group.

If the roots of the 130 children disappeared, then she could not maintain her spirit power.

Temporarily closing her eyes, Asuka mentally prepared herself before inquiring:

"Let me ask about something, what does your so called [Desired form of timeline] refer to?"

".....What can you do even if you know the answer?"

"I am simply curious that's all. Because if you returned back to the original timeline, then you will die right?"

Asuka asked in a subtle tone, which was naturally an uncertainty.

They appeared because the Hamelin's demons were summoned, in other words, they were destined to die as spirits.

If they wanted to stay in Little Garden as a faerie then it's alright, but if they left Little Garden it would be a difficult proposition to understand.

Spreading out her arms, Asuka smiled towards the group and proposed:

"You don't have to return to that era of terror. If you have no place in Little Garden, why not come to our community? We need comrades just like you. If you can stretch to include the 131st member, everyone would be happy."

"—....."

The momentum of the group had changed.

It wasn't hostility, but confusion.

".....Asuka, we are happy that you invited us, with these words, our long journey has finally been recognized."

"Even so, we still have to go back, in order to weave out the later age."

"Because you are kind, in the end we hope that you will listen to us, one is who not dead and also didn't disappear—The other possibility in [The Pied Piper of Hamelin]....."

The whole cave was filled with radiance and the narration about the legendary possibilities of how [The Pied Piper of Hamelin] began.

—Year 1284, John and Paul diary 26th of June. 130 children born in Hamelin were seduced by a piper, dressed in all kinds of colors, the children were all lost at the place of execution near the hills.—

The final interpretation of this inscription

The content may be that the 130 children came to a new land and built their own town.

Leaving their parents, going down the Weser river, blowing the flute while singing songs and advancing to the unknown lands were the kids.

Not by the hands of others, but by their own, started a community named [Town].

In other words, in this legend, the so-called piper is similar to the position of the new city's leader.

"Asuka, we have to return to our community."

"To that day on year 1284."

"Raising our flag, our second home."

"....."

'Really?' Asuka asked with a tinge of loneliness.

They were different from Asuka, they didn't abandon everything to come to Little Garden.

But forced to be summoned and trapped in the place called Little Garden.

And now they can finally return to their original world. This desire, of course, will not be given up because of a young girl.

Seeming to have given up, Asuka shrugged her shoulders and smiled helplessly.

"Since there is no other choice. I will pray in Little Garden and bless you all in successfully building your town plan."

".....Thank you, Asuka."

"Because you are such a person, we can leave it to you."

"The Red Iron Giant soldier Deen, as well as— our number 131 comrade!"

'Eh?' These words were carried away by the strong winds.

The liberated group of faeries' spirit power started forming into a human form.

From the light that appeared, was a pointy-hatted faerie, the one who Asuka had formed a deep relationship with.

The communal voice started disappearing while they echoed out:

"——We have waited for generations to hand that [Extension] of spirit power to that child. This is the last proof that we were here in Little Garden, and we entrust it to you—"

After that, the presence of the group was no longer in the cave.

What was left was the pointy-hatted faerie who was on Asuka's palm.

Rubbing her eyes while feeling sleepy, the faerie slowly sat up.

".....Asuka~?"

".....Un, good morning, Mel."

"Mel?"

"Yes, you have inherited the achievement of [The Pied Piper of Hamelin], and from now on—my companion."

Hearing these words, Mel went "Un~~" and tilted her head.

Glancing around, slowly shaking her head from left to right and considering something.

"—Good!"

With a face full of smiles, Mel replied.

Part 3

48 hours after the game has ended.

In addition to the victory celebration and the rebirth festival, there was still a banquet to be held in conjunction on the last day. Sandra, who had obtained victory over the Demon Lord, and also [No Name] who had contributed with significant achievements, greatly heated up the lively atmosphere. In the game where thousands of people were trapped in the Demon Lord game, the small amount of sacrifices in the end led to victory. Everyone also generously praised [Salamandra] and [No Name]. After the participation in the game, no one would despise them anymore. Because Izayoi's strategy and tactics ultimately lead to success.

—The other side, back of the stage.

Mandra's personal guards were allowed to attend the banquet and rest. This was a rarely goodwill act that surprised the guards, but now they were all enjoying the banquet outside. During this period of time, Mandra was the only person inside the palace office, reading a black envelope stamped by [Thousand Eyes].

"....."

No other person was present and the doors and windows were tightly closed. The office was empty.

Having read all the contents of the letter placed on the desk, Mandra sighed and said to himself:

"『The festival that ran smoothly and the successful repelling of the Demon Lord, we celebrate the meaning of the expression. We also hope to expect great things from the future Northern Floor Master of [Salamandra]. Note: The godly jade Iron from the Stellar Sea Dragon King has been sent to those bait already.』

Eh?.....As expected from 『Thousand Eyes』, everything was in their control? We really cannot afford to be doing bad things."

"What bad things?"

Mandra suddenly stood up.

There was no one around, but he had some impression on this voice.

"The Brat from [No Name].....! Where are you!"

"Hiding in the ceilings!"

'Pong!' Izayoi broke apart the ceiling and appeared.

There was no clue as to how he got in, but Izayoi was currently hanging his body on the cobwebs. It was obvious that his right hand was still bandaged and not yet recovered, which made it really troublesome to sneak in.

Patting away the dust on his body, he spoke with a disdainful smile:

"Well, what bad things does it relate to? It is not about the matter where [Salamandra] lured the Demon Lord into the festival right?"

"......What!"

"Oh? How is this surprising? It could be inferred as normal thinking right? Those guys appeared from the exhibits that were showcased. And there were 130 pieces of stained glass in total that portrayed the Piper. Unless the organizer intentionally did it, it will certainly make people feel suspicious right?"

'Am I wrong?' Izayoi asked while tilting his head.

With cold sweat trickling down his back, Mandra grabbed the hilt of his sword that was hanging on his waist.

Thinking that this problem has gone rather downright, Izayoi scratched his head and sat down on the desk.

"Whoa, don't do that, I am not here because of that reason. The reason why I came here was, erm, how to say it? It should be the so-called [Curiosity]."

"What.....!"

"Although this is my personal opinion, but you don't wish to kill Sandra or inherit the big position, right? But you hope.....that Sandra would cheer up and take up shouldering [Salamandra]. There is only one conclusion for this speculation. Do you have a sister complex?"

"....."

"Haha, I am just joking. I tried to think of the reason a bit.....and thought about the mission of the [Floor Masters]. In simple times, if this festival was attacked, it should be some sort of initiation ritual right?"

[Floor Master] must be able to have a bulwark against a Demon Lord's attack. In other words, if you can crack a Demon Lord's game, then the surrounding communities will acknowledge that they can work independently.

That way, Izayoi was able to point out that this incident was the initiation ceremony.

Mandra, who was accused, started sweating on the palms. Izayoi ignored that reaction and continued:

"New Demon Lord vs New Floor Master? Aiyah Aiyah, saying it is a coincidence is just too lucky! If you want to base it on Sandra's accumulated experience, there is no better opponent. This time Sandra will be able to work independently and be recognized as the Northern Floor Master! Oh really! The future of [Salamandra] has calmed down now!"

"".....Gu....."

Mandra gritted his teeth. Mentioning it to here, Izayoi suddenly put on sharp eyes.

".....Oi, say something! While I am feeling good please say something that has more guarantee! When we had to face the Demon Lord, what happened to your advocate order giving attitude!"

Mandra simply grabbed tightly onto the hilt of his sword.

Turning his upper body backwards, Izayoi ridiculed Mandra's response.

"There were only 5 people who were dead? Ah, this is great, so fortunate that everyone who died was from [Salamandra]! If something had happened to my companions, not only you—I will even eradicate Sandra."

"This had nothing to do with Sandra!"

Mandra roared while pulling the saber from his waist.

Izayoi who sat on the desk changed to a dismissive attitude to appease Mandra.

"I say.....I will repeat it one more time. I do not intend to expose this matter. Because of what order, at best is to protect the things that are in contaminated conditions."

"Why do you have an attitude of someone who seemingly knows everything....."

"That's right, I did not pretend to understand. So I don't care even if others help out in your unruly ways. In fact, I am no better. I don't mind conspiracies or even doing crimes. You, who could willingly kill people, only — You better have the heart to do these acts!"

"Gu.....!"

"I base on my own principles to judge what I see as the smell of good or evil but this example is simply rubbish. I have no intention to be dragged in.....but since you want to play, I have nothing to say. I advise you'd better get to know one thing, you definitely have no chance of even swinging that sword towards me."

Izayoi slowly got up from the desk.

His eyes were clearly filled with contempt and anger.

"You say Sandra isn't involved? Because of your planning and what ghostly ritual that had gotten your companions killed. You think you can pretend to look like you don't know anything and just let it get past you? What gives you the big rights to say that to the participants during the victory celebration?

Let's applaud our comrades who had fought honorably?|

Give prayers to those who gave a honorary sacrifice?

Ha! This is really killing me! These kind of words, only someone who had hidden secrets before would—"

"—Indeed know."

'What?' Izayoi's sentence was cut off.

On a closer look, Mandra's hand which held onto the sword was quivering.

"I say.....they were indeed informed. Except Sandra, every member in [Salamandra] knew, that the events that led up to the attack on [Salamandra] was orchestrated.....! They understood everything and lost their lives! In the case where they understood everything.....shamelessly lost their lives."

"....."

Was Mandra trembling because of anger? Or shame?

Revealing an expression that defined he had reached a dead end, Mandra started back at Izayoi.

"How would someone like you who is not from Little Garden know.....! Protect the community's flag! Name! Honorary sense! Betrayed by the most powerful successor, with the leader confined in bed.....! In order to support this community that is on the verge of collapse, we have to bet on our own lives! How would someone from outside Little Garden, a mere human boy, understand it all!"

It was true that Izayoi was an outsider to Little Garden.

Bearing such sharp criticism, Izayoi could only look away and fiercely clicked his tongue.

Mandra who trembled with agitation closed his eyes and sheathed back the saber.

"......However, I don't think I can win against you alone. I'm only an Lesser Dragon who couldn't develop to the expectations of my people. The talent that I have cannot even hold a candle to that of my younger sister who hasn't even reached a hundred in age."

He unbuckled his sword belt and placed his weapon on the floor.

"Do it then, your anger is justified. But, hopefully you can just write off this incident .....with just this life of mine."

".....hai."

Izayoi let out a sigh that seemed to be the deflation of his anger.

"What good will that bring? I honestly think that this doesn't really matter. Ahh~ What? Betrayed by the strongest candidate for the heir? Is it that? Was it Sala, the eldest sibling that Shiroyasha had mentioned before?"

"........Yes. It was originally supposed to be Nee-sama to inherit [Salamandra] due to her matured power. But if Otou-sama hadn't fallen sick, the 11 year old Sandra would not have to sit on the Floor Master seat......."

'Ah, is that so?' Appearing to have lost interest, Izayoi turned his back to once again face Mandra.

Yes, supposed to inherit, but did not happen.

Then the result would mean everything right now. Izayoi had no interest to the reason why she left, or also dig into it.

"Well, what's done is done, this is not a matter I should intervene in. If you count in the cost of the damaged town, the one who ended up with the most losses are still you guys, and the one with the most benefit would be us. There is no special need to break things up."

"......Sorry."

Izayoi who had planned to leave stopped his movements because of the apology, probably because of Mandra's bowing behavior that made him unhappy. He turned back and made an offer with a vicious smile:

"No, oh yeah, I should take this chance to sign a contract."

".....Gu...."

Mandra revealed a nervous expression.

Because Izayoi had mentioned that many unreasonable problems, he has no right to refuse in his current position.

Lifting up his forefinger, Izayoi gave a very malicious smile.

"This is what you owe us this time. Not you, but the entire [Salamandra]— From now onwards we will continue to fight the Demon Lords, in the case where something happens to our community.....you must be the first to come. This way then I can forgive you."

Without waiting for Mandra's reply, Izayoi turned to leave.

Looking at the figure who strode out of the office without waiting for an answer, Mandra could only murmur to himself:

"—Swearing on my flag. [Salamandra] will immediately rush over if help is needed."

Part 4

—Remains of [No Name] plantation.

One month after the incident.

A bunch of people who came back from the boundary wall immediately rushed to the plantation and pleaded Mel to restore the land.

Asuka and the other kids had expectations to see Mel flourish but.....

"Can't!"

Mel shook her head firmly.

Facing water depletion and abandoned soil, with only the sand and gravel, Mel could only see the white flag of surrender.

Asuka once again asked her:

"Can't?"

"Can't!"

This answer was without hesitation. Since the earth faerie had clearly shown her attitude, it was an impossible task for someone without that high of a spirit power.

Asuka who looked apologetic bowed and apologized to everyone:

"Sorry.....For making that kind of speech that was filled with expectations...."

"Please.....Please don't take it to heart! I am sure that there will be other chances!"

"That's right, Asuka, it will be fine if we continue to participate in other gift games."

Kuro Usagi and Kasukabe comforted the dejected Asuka.

Izayoi grabbed a handful of gravel from the plantation and suddenly questioned Mel:

"I say, Ko-chibi."

"Ko-chibi?"

"Yes, because you are [Super small Mel] so for you it is omitted as Ko-chibi. This is only a hypothesis.....but assume if we can have something like soil nutrients, can you break those down to let plants live? For example using remains of wood or the surrounding forest as a base fertilizer."

'Hmmmm?' Mel started thinking. It looks like it was a pretty good proposal.

If it is not starting from scratch, but using other materials to revive the soil, then maybe—

"......Can do!"

"Really?"

"Maybe!"

Asuka felt her energy being deflated, but it seems like this method was worth a try.

Taking out a gift card, Asuka called out Deen and ordered it.

"Deen! Start immediately! The kids will also help!"

"Understood!"

"DeN!"

Deen nodded in response while the kids who were full of energy started running off.

Asuka and company sent everyone off and stayed at their original position to wait for everyone to come back. Earning it's own spirit power to survive individually, Mel playfully hopped around until it finally jumped onto Asuka.

Looking at both of them behaving in such an amicable way, Izayoi could not help but tease them:

"What, Ojou-sama, so you have the interest of loving with such cute things eh."

"Ah this~ How to say? Ever since coming to Little Garden, loving kids has been quite interesting.....and also....."

Asuka's eyes suddenly drifted into the distance.

Looking at somewhere further than Little Garden, she muttered:

".....Actually, I was supposed to have sisters back then, so this was probably why."

"......Really."

Yes, destined to [Have] sisters, however, this did not happen.

The conversation should have ended now, as Izayoi did not continue to pry.

Watching the giant and kids frolicking around while running, Asuka mischievously smiled and touched Mel.

"Okay, Mel, the next step will be tiring! If we want to revive the soil sooner and participate in Halloween. You have to be more hardworking than the others!"

"Okay♪"

Facing Asuka's expectation, The faerie Mel responded full of spirits.

Although it should be something far down the line, but one day, the date where Halloween activities can be held in this community will come.

The small regret of staying in that home.

She dreamt of saying [Trick or Treat!], and imagined that that hope will come true in the near future.